

ASSIZE:

OR

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Grand Jubilee.

IN WHICH

We shall be freed from all our Miseries,
and have perpetual Ease and Happiness, or
endless Miseries and Torments. As delivered
in Four Sermons on the 20th Chapter of Re-
velations, v. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

To which is added,

Two SERMONS upon the First of the
Canticles, v. 6, 7.

By STIMPSON SMITH, Minister
of Brattlewell in Essex.

Mat. 16. 26. *What is a Man profited, if he shall
gain the whole World, and loose his own Soul, or
what shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul.*

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The PREFACE

Christian Reader,

THE Learned and Pious Author of this Book, was so affected with his Duty, that he spar'd no time or Pains amongst his People to promote the Glory of God, and an Amendment in their Lives and Conversation; to which Purpose he not only continued Preaching the Word to them in Season, and out of Season, but also published several Religious Books to admonish them of their Duty, with so much Sincerity and Plainness, that they must needs melt into Contrition the Stony Hearts of the most obdurate Sinners.

He seems to have a most tender Regard for the Salvation of his Parishioners at Brittlewell in Essex, over whom he had long labour'd in the Vineyard, and been a faithful Minister in the Lord, whom he openly declar'd he lov'd with all his Heart. And no Question but he found the Benefit of his Preaching amongst them, by the Desire he had for their further Increase of Godliness, and the frequent Exhortations he gave them to continue stedfast in the Faith, unto which they were called, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord.

In this Book he exhorts them to lose no time, but to work out their Salvation with Fear and Trembling, whilst it is yet Day, for the Night cometh, when no Man can work, and
therefore

The PREFACE.

therefore to esteem Time as the most precious thing in the World ; and the rather, because neither he nor they knew how soon they should be called to give an Account of their Works ; charging them not to defer their Repentance till it was too late ; for many have often had good Purposes of Heart to cleave unto the Lord, which have been prevented by Death, for want of timely Repentance ; and therefore it behoves them to agree with the Adversary while they are in the way with him lest they should be Arrested by Death when they must be sure to pay the utmost Farthing.

Consider then Eternity is no Dream, Hell and the Worm that never dies is no melancholy Conceit, Heaven is no feigned Elysium : There is the greatest Reality imaginable in these things, whatever Men may think of them, though they are Spiritual and out of the ken of Sense, for they are real and within the View of Faith : Look not therefore at the things which are seen, but look at the things which are not seen ; for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Meditate, saith he, much of the Strictness and Suddenness of that Judgment Day, which thou and I must pass thro gh into an Everlasting State : Wherein God the impartial Judge will require an Account at our Hands, of all our Talents. We must then
account.

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account for Time, how we have spent that; for Estate, how we have employed that; for Strength, how we have laid out that; for Affections and Mercies; how they have been improved, for the Relations we stood in here, how they have been discharged; and for Seasons and Means of Grace, how they have been husbanded; and look, how we have sowed here, so shall we reap hereafter.

I have endeavoured in this Edition, to have it more perfect and correct than any before published, having had Assistance of several able Ministers, as also several Additions from Mr. Smith's own Hand, which he designed to have publish'd in the Second Edition, had the Lord thought fit to have continu'd him longer amongst us.

Use then, I beseech thee, this Book as a Help to thee, to better thee in the Performance of that Duty, which concerns thee so much, that thou mayst one Day give an Account of thy Works. And if thou reap any Benefit by it, give the Praise unto God, from whom every good and perfect Work proceedeth: For God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and Truth. And may God bless thee in all that thou goest about to do, and save thee in the Hour of Death, is, and shall be the daily Prayers of thine in the Lord.

E. M.

The

*The Last GREAT ASSIZE or Day
of Jubilee.*

HIS winged Hosts, fly through all Coasts.
Together gathering.

Both Good and Bad, both Quick and Dead,
and all to Judgment bring.

So that e'ry one before the Throne
of Christ our Judge is brought:
Both Righteous and Impious,
that Good or Ill had wrought.

All these do stand at Christ's right Hand
with Pleasure and Delight:
Cloathed in Bright, a glorious Sight,
and shines Day without Night.

These Blessed ones they sit on Thrones,
Judging the World with me:
Come and possess your Happiness,
and bought Felicity.

Henceforth no Fears, no Care nor Tears,
no Sin shall you annoy:
Nor any thing that Grief doth bring,
Eternal Rest and Joy.

You bore the Cross, and suffered loss
of all for my Name sake:
Receive the Crown that's now your own,
come and a Kingdom take.

T H R

T H E

Last Great Assize.

The First Sermon.

Rev. xx. Ver. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15,

11. And I saw a great white Throne, and him that sat on it; from whose Face the Earth and the Heavens fled away, and there was found no Place for them. 12. And I saw the Dead small and great stand before God, and the Books were opened; and another Book was opened, which is the Book of Life: And the Dead were judged out of those things which were written in the Books, according to their Works. 13. And the Sea gave up the Dead which were in it, and Death and Hell delivered up their Dead which were in them: And they were judged every Man according to their Works. 14. And Death and Hell were cast into the Lake of Fire; this is the second Death. 15. And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life, was cast into the Lake of Fire.



HAVING lately explained to you the Mysteries of Christ's Incarnation, and taking our Nature upon him to redeem Mankind from eternal Miseries, being his first Coming in Humility to us, to offer us Salvation, upon the Terms of Faith and Repentance. It can be no less advantageous to you, that I

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put

put you in mind of his second Coming in Glory to judge the World, that those that will not be work'd upon by his Coming in Love and Compassion, might be terrified and astonished by his Coming to judge us, when he shall pronounce that final Judgment, *Come ye Blessed into that Eternal Happiness prepared for you from the beginning of the World. And go ye cursed into Everlasting Torments, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* Which Judgment although it is decay'd for a time, yet it will certainly come, as a Thief in the Night, in which the Heavens shall pass away with a great Noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat, the Earth also, and the Works that are therein shall be burnt up, 2 Pet 3. 10. It is a fearful Thing to fall into the Hands of the living God, who will neither be brib'd by Monies or Preferment. If we do but fall into his Hands in a Fever in our Bed, or in a Tempest at Sea, or in a Discontent at Home: But to fall into the Hands of the living God, so, that that living God enters into Judgment with us, and passeth a final and irrevocable Judgment upon us, is a Consternation of all our Spirits, and Extermination of all our Succours; especially if we consider, how that God with one Word made all; so with another he can destroy all, *As he spake, and it was done, he commanded and all stood fast,* Psal. 33. 9. so he can speak, and all shall be undone, command, and all shall fall in Pieces.

The Sum of Scripture.

To which End I have chosen this Place of Scripture, which so powerfully presses an awful Dread and Fear on the Minds of those who neglect to improve the precious Moments of this Life, and put away far from them this Day of the Lord, saying, *where are the signs of his coming?* For since the Fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the Creation, 2 Pet. 3. 4. But what then saith the Apostle, was not the World that then was, overflowed with Water and perish'd; and if that were done in Earnest, why do ye make a Jest of this? That the Heavens and the Earth which are now, are reserved unto Fire against the Day of Judgment. And St. Jude bids us, v. 17. *Remember the Words which was spoken before of the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, that there should be Mockers in the last time.* Against whom Isaiah prophesieth, Isa. 66. 15. *That the Lord will come with Fire, and with his Chariots, like a Whirlwind, to render his Anger with Fury: For by Fire, and by his Sword will the Lord plead with all Flesh.* And the Prophet Joel calls it, *A Day of Darkness and Gloominess, and yet a Fire devouring before them, and a Flame burneth behind them.* Which is sufficient to make every Man to remember, who has any Regard to his future Happiness, the Words of the Holy Ghost written by St. John in the first of the Revelations Verse 7. *where he saith, Behold he cometh with Clouds, and every Eye shall see him: And all the*

Kindreds of the Earth shall wail and lament; and weep and howl because of him.

The five Verses in the Text, contain in them a very lively Description of our Saviour's second Coming to Judgment; which although he saw it only in a Vision, yet it is express'd with as much Majesty as Words are capable to utter: For Words are not capable to express it with that *Glory*, as when the Son of Man shall sit attended with the heavenly Host, *having his Throne like a fiery Flame, and his Wheels as burning Fire, and a fiery Stream issuing from him, Dan. 7. 9.*

The Parts of the Text.

This *John* who wrote the Book of the Revelations, was the *Evangelist*, and the beloved Disciple of Christ, who follow'd him wheresoever he went, and stood by him, not only when he was apprehended in the Garden, but went with him to the Judgment seat of *Pilate*, and never denied him as *Peter* did, but even attended him to his Death on the Cross, and never left him till he had lain him in his Sepulchre; and after for Preaching the Gospel, was banish'd by *Domitian*, the Roman Emperor, to the desolate Island of *Patmos*; where this Vision of the *Last Day*, was revealed to him, as a singular Favour of Heaven. He was one of the three Disciples that always attended his Lord and Master. He was with him at the Marriage of *Cana* in *Galilee*, and afterwards in the Garden, and before *Pilate*, and lean'd upon his Breast at Supper, where he ask'd him many Questions; and upon the Cross, Christ commended

mended the Care of his Mother to him, saying,
Behold thy Mother.

The Person of the Judge.

The Person of the Judge is described in the first Verse of the Text, full of Majesty, Power, and Intregity, Severity, and Terror. And the Persons who are to appear before him to Judgment, are, he tells us, in the second Verse, *Both small and great*, all that ever were born, or shall be, to the End of the World, rich and poor, high and low, all shall be gathered together at the Sound of the last Trumpet on this terrible Day, to appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ, and our own Consciences will be both Jury and Witneses to acquit or condemn us; for the Holy Scriptures tells us, that *the Books* shall be opened, and that then God will Judge every Man according to his Works, our Consciences giving Evidences either for or against us, by which we must either stand or fall.

The Issue of the Judgment.

Those whose Names are written in the *Book of Life*, shall be blessed and happy for ever; but Death, Hell, and Satan, and all ungodly Person shall be cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, there to remain with the Apostate Angels, who kept not the first Covenant, but fell, to endure eternal Torments for evermore, which is the second Death.

And thus having told you the meaning of the Text, I shall in the next Place, proceed to speak to the several Points mentioned in the Text,

one by one ; in order unto which, if you give good heed, I hope God of his infinite Mercy will so open your Hearts, that you may so hear and understand his Will, as to escape the second Death, and your sinful Souls may be saved in the Day of our Lord Jesus.

And I saw a great white Throne, and him that sat on it, from whose Face the Earth and the Heaven fled away, and there was found no Place for them.

I saw a great white Throne, &c.

St. John tells us, he saw a great white Throne, as a Place put in order for the Accommodation of the Judge that sat on it, which he was commanded to record in a Book, that no one might plead Ignorance, but having a true Sense of his coming, we might take Care to work out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling, and meet him in the Clouds of Heaven with Joy, and not with Grief: By which we might observe the unexpressible Goodness of Christ to his Church and People, that he reveals his second Coming to St. John, to the Intent that none may be so ignorant of it, but prepare to meet the Bridegroom with Oil in their Lamps.

Knowledge of the Last Judgment necessary.

Christ's Coming to Judgment is nearer at hand now than ever ; it was expected in the Times of the Patriarchs and Prophets, but then he had not took our Nature upon him, and

and paid the Debt due to his Father by our Fall and Transgressions: But that being done, we have more Reason to expect it now then ever, when we are so divided among our selves, and such a Rent is made in his seamless Coat, by our Divisions and Animosities. What can any Christian or true Believer expect, but that the Day of the Lord is at Hand, when there are so many *Satyrs* and *Libels* daily published against our Holy Religion, and Men are grown so audacious in Contempt of Authority, as to deny the Lord that redeemed them. When the *Holy Sabbath*, which God by express Commandment has set apart for serving him, is so much prophand, and instead of serving in his Churches, which he has set apart to be worshipp'd in, Men spend the Day in Sports and Pastimes; which abominable Sin, all true Christians ought to beg of God to forgive, for the sake of the few Righteous that remain amongst us, and have not yet bowed their Heads unto *Baal*. And what is the Meaning of all this Wickedness in the Land, but to put us in mind of the last Judgment, which none of us know how soon it may happen, for it will come upon us as a *Thief in the Night*. And it may happen in the Night of Ignorance, or in the Night of Wantonness, or in the Night of sinful Melancholly, and Suspicion of his Mercy, or he may come in the Night of so stupid, or so raging a Sickness, as we are not capable of receiving him in the Absolution of his Minister, or in the Participation of his *Body* and of his *Blood* in the Sacrament: Nay he may

come upon us in such a Night, as when all these Nights of Ignorance, of Wantonness, of Desperation, of Sickness, of Stupidity and Rage, may be upon us all at once.

There is not one Truth in the whole Bible more often urg'd, than this of Christ's Coming to Judgment, to awaken Men out of their deep Security, and make them mindful of that Majesty before whom all must one Day appear to give up their Accounts. *Enoch* the Seventh from *Adam*, as *St. Jude* tells us, prophesied the Lord's Coming to Judgment, to take Vengeance on the Wicked and Disobedient, which should be a terrible and awakening Doctrine to Souls that are drowzy, and as it were buried in their Sins, to consider they must one Day give an Account of all their Thoughts, Words and Actions, before the dreadful Majesty of Heaven.

How did this provoke *St. Paul*, when he preach'd unto *Felix* the Governor, of Temperance, Righteousness, and Judgment to come, *Acts* 24. 25. so that his very Knees smote together, and he trembled. And *Habakkuk*, a Prophet, and a very Holy Man, when he heard of the Last Judgment, acknowledg'd his Fear, saying, my Belly trembled, and my Lips quiver'd at the Voice, and Rottenness enter'd into my Bones. And holy *David*, though a Man after God's own Heart, and who upon all other Occasions, had Courage enough, was not ashamed to own, that his Flesh trembled for fear of God, and that he was afraid of his Judgments, *Psa*, 119. v. 120. And it is recorded of *Noah*, that when the Lord

Lord had foretold him, that he would drown the World, although there was an hundred and twenty Years to come, before it was to happen, that he was so mov'd with that Admonition, that he built the Ark to save himself and his Family, from the Destruction that after fell upon all Mankind but them, And as *St. Austin* saith, every Blow that was given upon the Ark by Noah, was so many Warning Pieces to the whole World.

And now, my Brethren, what Doctrine can be more useful to the Men of this untoward Generation, who are forgetful of every good Duty, and more especially of the Day of Death and Judgment, which the Want of the Scriptures, make the Ground of all Sin : For in the Days of Noah, they did eat, they drank, they were married and given in Marriage, they planted, they builded, never dreaming of the Judgment that was so nigh at hand, until the Day came upon them, as a Snare, being unmindful of the Judgment, not dreaming it was so nigh at hand. And so it will be with many in these our Days, who have no regard to Futurity, until the Day come upon them as a Snare, and it is too late for Rocks or Mountains to shelter them from the Fear of him that sits on the Throne. Which is further exemplified in the Parable of the foolish Virgins, who slumber'd and slept, and took not their Oil of Faith in their Lamps, against the coming of the Bridegroom. As also of the evil Servant in the Gospel, who unconcernedly continu'd to eat and drink, and beat his Fellow Servant, never
B 5 dreaming;

dreaming of his Masters returning so soon as he did.

How should the Consideration of these things, rouse up every Christian from the Lethargy of Sin, to take care of our selves in time, and not to be ruin'd for ever ; for who that is loaded with a Weight of Sin, can abide the Coming of the Lord to Judgment And yet all must appear before the Judgment, Seat of Christ ? There are no Exceptions, both *Good and Bad*, Rich and Poor, there is no sheltering Place for any, which ought to beget in every one of us a Reverence of that Divine Majesty, who has Power to do with us, as the Potter doth with his Clay to mould us to Honour or to Dishonour.

There are two things which are great Hindrances to Godly People, from a due Preparation for this Day.

First, A careless neglect of Religious Duties and shifting them off to the last, flattering our selves, it is time enough to begin to repent, and that the Master will not come as yet, though it is written, *the Day and Hour knoweth no Man, no, not the Angels in Heaven.* Who knows whether he shall live an Hour, seeing our Life is in the Hands of God, who can take it from us in a Moment ; for as *St. Austin* saith, The Day of Death is not known, and therefore every Day we must endeavour to repent, and prepare our selves for this sudden Dissolution, which every Man is subject to by Nature, although he continues in ever so wicked a State of Life. We are surrounded with innumerable Accidents,
Death

Death meets us at every Corner, and is procured by every Instrument of Violence; only as Excess of Wine, or a Debauch, or by the Stumbling at a Stone, by the Fall of a Tile, or by the Violence of a Beast, and by every thing in Providence. There is no State, no Accident, no Circumstance in Life, but has been soar'd by some sad Accident of a dying Friend. The Son of Syrach tells us, *The Bride went into her Chamber, and knew not what would befall her there.* A friendly meeting often ends in a sorrowful parting; nay, sometimes makes an eternal parting. Many have died under the Hands of their Paranyms, or Maids in dressing to their Nuptials, and their *Wedding-Garments* have been laid aside, to put on a *Wedding-Shroud*: and instead of a Nuptial Bed, they have laid down in the Silence of the Grave.

And if so, how doth it behove every one to repent in time, and prepare himself for the great and terrible Day of the Lord's Coming to Judgment; for there is no Repentance in the Grave, as the Tree falls so it lies. Let us remember the Fool in the Gospel, who when he promised himself an *Enlargement in his Barns*, and bids his Soul, *take its rest for many Years*, yet it was taken from him that very Night. And so it might be with every one, that promises to himself a time beyond his Power to command; therefore whilst it is called to Day let us hear his Voice, for who can tell what a Day may bring forth, lest the Night of Death steal upon us, wherein no Man can Work.

And

And therefore it is high time to hearken to the Word of God, whilst the Gospel is preach'd unto us, and while he knocketh at the Door of our Hearts, and would gladly enter in; for he saith, *If any Man will hear my Voice, and open the Door, I will come in and sup with him, and be with me.* Wherein you see Christ makes a Proclamation of his Love, to all that believe in him, and therefore it behoves all of us, to make use of this present time, while we have it, for fear it should be too late, for *Time and Tide will stay for none.* And therefore it is good, that in Time we make our Calling and Election sure, and labour with the Apostle, to work out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling, and not to lie in Security, and neglect our Duty to God, which is the first Hindrance that we do not oftner meditate in the Day of Death and Judgment, for after Death there is no Repentance; for who can be such a Fool to imagine, that God has leaden Feet, because he is slow in coming, but rather with the wise Virgins in the Gospel, would not trim his Lamp, and put in Oil, so that he may find us ready, and prepared for his Coming, and we are not cast out, and thereby feel his Iron Hand.

Secondly, There is another Hindrance that keeps Men from minding the Judgment to come, which is the Cares of this Life, and the Enjoyments thereof, which usually swallows them up in a continual hurry of Business, so that they think of nothing else, and cannot spare even the Sabbath from looking over their Books of Accounts, looking upon any Account they must.

must give of their Words and Actions at the Day of Judgment, as an impertinent thing only to frighten Fools and Children: Whereas did they but consider that even this Night their Souls might be taken from them, *Luke 12. 19.* and that they stand continually tottering on the Bank of the Grave, they would husband their time to a better End, and lay up for themselves Riches that can never fail them, making their chief Call to make their Reckoning strait, against the Day of Reckoning come, which no Man can tell how soon; they would then part withal the trifling Vanities of this World, to secure to themselves a *Pearl* of inestimable Price: For all that we can value in this Life, is a quiet Mind, and a good Conscience.

The ancient Philosophers ever made it their Study, not to be over careful for the things of this World, any more than what is necessary for the support of Life; for here we are but as *Pilgrims*, travelling through a Wilderness, to a Land flowing with Milk and Honey, the *Heavenly Canaan*, the *New Jerusalem*, and should enjoy the things of this World, as using them but not abusing them, having an Eye to the Recompence of Reward, where Christ sits at the right Hand of his Father on a *white Throne*, judging the twelve of Tribes *Israel*.

God takes some out of the World, because it is not worthy of them, and others he suffers not to live out half their time, who are not worthy of the World, as he did *Ahab*, *Agag*, and *Herod*, who being vile Monsters, did not live out half their Days. And God made haste

to take away good *Josiah* from the *Evil* to come because his Soul pleased him. And why, if we consider, should God deal so graciously with us, who have the Gospel in its Purity preach'd unto us, and deal so severely with other Nations, who worship him in Superstition and Idolatry, only that he expects we should bring forth some Fruits in our Lives, worthy of the Goodness he has been pleas'd to shew unto us; which if we do not, then we must expect the same Measure to be meated to us, as he hath done to others.

Some God punishes in this Life, which should be a Warning to us, to amend our Lives; others he lets alone, as he did *Pharoah*, for a little time, and many he reserves to the Day of Judgment, and therefore let no Man slumber in his Security, though he has Strength, Health, and Riches, and all that the World can afford, but rather let him leave the World, and apply himself to Heaven; as *Sheba* the Queen of the South did, who left all, and came from the furthestmost Part of the World, to hear the Wisdom of *Solomon*; which if we will not do, and hear the Voice of the Turtle in these our Days, we must expect with the Jews to be forsaken, and left as Vagabonds wandering up and down upon the Earth, or like Sheep having no Shepherd, and at last have our Torments with the Wicked in Hell fire; so much for Security.

Doct. I. *Christ's Throne described by two Properties.*

2. Christ's Coming with great Glory.

The Great Throne shews the wonderful Might, Majesty, and Power of the Judge, and the White Throne shews the Purity, Integrity, and Uprightness of the Judge, and both demonstrate unto us, the wonderful Majesty and Power, in which the Lord Jesus shall appear at the second time of his Coming, which is answerable in all Points to what we find in the twenty-fifth Chapter of the Apostle, viz. *And then shall we see the Son of Man coming in the Clouds, with Power and great Glory, attended with Angels, Patriarchs, Prophets, Martyrs, and all the Celestial Choir, with Joy to those that have done well, and Terror to the Evil Doers; for now he shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and made marvellous in them that believe,* 2 Thess. I. 10. But the Wicked shall cry to the Mountains to fall upon them, and the Hills to cover them, and hide them from his Presence, whom they are not able to endure, Rev. 6. 16.

For his Herald, he will have an Arch-Angel sounding the last Trumpet, to proclaim his being on the Throne, in order to judge the Quick and the Dead, when the Grave and Hell, and the Sea shall give up their Dead, and all shall come unto Judgment, and the Heavens shall pass away with a Noise, and the Elements melt with fervent Heat.

And the Use we ought to make of this, is seriously to consider the Difference between Christ's coming in the Flesh, and his Second Coming to judge those that he died for: But
for

for those that he finds unprofitable Servants notwithstanding all this State and Glory, better it was for them that a Millstone were tied about their Necks, and that they were drown'd eternally in the Sea, than to hear that dreadful Sentence pronounc'd upon them, *Goye Cursed into everlasting Torments, prepared for the Devils, and those that fear'd not God.*

His first Coming was in Meekness, Love, and Humility, for he was laid in a Manger between two Beasts, an Ox and Ass, which a learned Father of the Church said, is to be as it were, between a Jew and a Gentile. And when he grew up, he declares, *The Foxes have Holes, and the Birds have Nests, but the Son of Man has not where to lay his Head*, in which Words he confesses himself to be the Son of Man, which shews his Meekness, in that he had no Place where to lay his Head, and his Love and Humility are abundantly express'd in his Sufferings; for he was wounded for our Transgressions, and the Chastisement of the Lord was upon him.

How shall we dare to make slight of so great a Mercy. The Jews thought once Crucifying to be enough, but we who stile ourselves Christians, by our repeated Sins of Oaths and Blasphemies crucify him afresh every Day, trampling under Foot the precious Blood of the Covenant, that speaks better things than that of Abel. And what can such expect at his Second Coming, but fiery Wrath and Indignation against all ungodly Sinners.

Therefore

Therefore let every one of us have a Care to do well, and say with Holy David, *Create in me, O God, a clean Heart, and renew a right Spirit within me*, Psal. 51. 10. For if we are willing, he is able to draw us out of the Sink of Sin, and makes us lie down in Safety, so that we shall appear blameless and spotless before God; clothed with the Robes of Christ's Righteousness, which he will be well pleas'd with; for *he delights not in the Death of a Sinner, but desires that he be converted and live*. And to this End, he sent his only begotten Son to take our Nature upon him, and to die for us, that we might not die eternally; who is become the Mediator between God and Man, making a Reconciliation for us, who had broken the first Covenant. As *Moses* and *Aaron* pleaded for the Children of Israel unto God, and desired rather to be blotted out of the Book of Life, than that they should perish. And as *Moses* led them through the Red Sea unto Canaan, so doth Christ lead us even to the heavenly Canaan, the New Jerusalem, shining with the Brightness of God's Presence, where is Fullness of Joy for evermore. Which I mention only to shew you the great Love which our Blessed Saviour had for Mankind, when he first came in the Flesh: For he so loved us, that he laid down his Life for our Sakes, and shall we be so ungrateful, as to spit in his Face, and trample under Feet this his Kindness, in not returning Thanks, and neglecting to love him again. St. *Ambrose* calls Ingratitude the Devil's Sponge, wherewith he wipes out God's Love and Mercy. But I hope
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no one who has been Baptiz'd under Christ's Banner will never be ungrateful, even in his Thoughts. For Christ cometh with ten thousands of his Saints and Angels to execute Judgment upon all, as David saith in the 57th Psalm *the Lord cometh to judge the World.* And St. John in the 9th Chapter saith, *The Father judgeth all Men, but has committed all Judgment to his Son* who is the second Person in the Holy Trinity although they all agree in the same Condemnation.

Let no Man then despair of Mercy, though his Sins be as red as Scarlet, yet he will make them as white as Snow, if we amend our wicked Lives and come into his Terms as they are set forth in the Gospel, which are very easy, for his Yoke is easy, and his Burden is light; for to this End he has taken our Nature upon him, which he has exalted above the Heavens, and has seated it in the Glory of his Father. And as we have no Reason to doubt of this his Communion with us in Nature, so we ought not to doubt of our Participation of his Grace in this World, and Glory hereafter; for he cannot forget us, if we do not forget our selves; which if we do, the greater will be our Condemnation, when the Lord cometh to judge the World in Righteousness and Truth: for as he is merciful in giving us time to repent, so he will take Vengeance on those who abuse his Patience and Long Suffering.

But to come close to the Text, this should astonish all hard-hearted Sinners, who despise Christ and his Ministers, who will at last manifest his Power in their Condemnation; for

For such as will hear the Voice of his Word, when by his Ministers, shall hear the terrible Voice of his, when he shall sit in Judgment, and bid them go into everlasting Burnings.

Since the Person of the Judge is of such endless Power and Glory, of such wonderful Might and Majesty, it should humble all Men when they come in his Presence, as they do who come to hear the Word preach'd, or to receive the Sacraments; for when the Word is preached, God speaks to us, and when we pray, we speak to God: And if so, how dare any Man sleep in his Presence, or use any unseemly Gesture. If they were to come into the Presence of the King, how careful would such be, not to offend, and to pull off their Hats, and shew all Tokens of Reverence? but to see many come into the Presence of the King of Kings, and Lords of Lords, with all the Negligence and Disrespect imaginable, is a thing no less frightful, than to be abhorr'd by all good Christians; even at their Prayers, or singing of Psalms, how slovenly do some Men perform these Duties, who if they were to be before a Prince or great Men, would not only stand up, but bow and cringe like Sycophants? which indecent Custom certainly ought to be avoided more in the Presence of God, when we are praying to him, or when he speaks to us by his Word preach'd.

But to sum up all, Christ saith, *John 14. 3.* If I go and prepare a Place for you, I will come again and receive you unto my self, that where I am, you might be also. Which Words are a great Comfort

fort and Consolation to Godly Persons, that yet they shall be where Christ the Son of God is then which gives full Assurance that they shall participate of the same Glory with Christ their Head, for he shall say unto them, *Come ye Blessed.* They shall both with Body and Soul receive a glorious Kingdom, and a beautiful Crown from the Hands of the Lord, which he has purchas'd for them, who with his own right Hand shall cover them, and with his Arm will protect them.

Christ intends it as a Favour, when he saith in the 22d of the Revelations, *Behold, I come quickly.* It is one Favour that he will come, seconded with another that he will come quickly; and to establish us in that Assurance, he adds, *Behold I come quickly, and my Reward is with me,* which one would think should work in every Man a Desire of that Day, I am sure it must in all Persons that live a Holy and Godly Life. There are scarce any among us, but expects his Coming: But that Crown which the Apostle speaks of, 2. Tim. 4. 8. is laid up for them that love the appearing of the Lord, and not only expect it but love it. And no Man can do so, that has not a Confidence in his Cause. No Prisoner longs for the Sessions, no Client longs for the Day of Hearings, unless he knew his Cause to be good, and he shall stand upright in Judgment. The Souls of the Martyrs under the Altar in Heaven, cry unto God, Rev. 6. 9. *How long, O Lord, Holy and True, dost thou not judge and avenge our Blood, which although it is not granted, but the Day of Judgment is put off,*

th yet God was not displeased with them, but gave
od is them *White Robes* as Tokens of Innocency.

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White Throne. Doct. 3. *The Integrity of Christ's Judgment.*

This Throne of *Jesus Christ* is called a *White Throne*, because it betokeneth *Purity, Beauty, and Integrity*, and shews that *Christ the Judge* of the World, will judge all Persons justly, as our Consciences shall either testify for or against us ; for he fears no Man's Person be he ever so great, he will not like earthly Judges be mov'd with Favour, nor frightened with big Words, nor will he admit of any pleading of Lawyers in a bad Cause for Fees. but every Man shall be judg'd according to his Works ; the upright Man shall enter into Life, and eternal Joy and Happiness, and the Murderer and hard hearted Sinners, shall be cast into the *Lake of Fire*, which is the second Death. The Apostle *Paul* saith, *We know that the Judgment of God is according unto Truth*, Rom. 2. v. 2. *when every secret thing (as Solomon saith.) Eccles. 12. 14. shall be brought to Judgment, and when he shall lighten all things that are hid in darkness, and make the Counsels of all their hearts manifest.* Then Woe unto them, whose Sins shall not only be laid open to the Face of the Judge, but exposed to all the *Host of Heaven*. What Shame and Confusion of Face must this cause, to those who cou'd cover their Sins in this World with Bribery and Corruptions, when they must appear unveiled, and stand the terrible Sentence of God, *Go ye Cursed, &c.* and find the Words of

of Solomon too sadly true, *Pro. 11. v. 8, The Wicked make a deceitful Work.*

Use 1. This is a great Comfort to those Who have been wrong'd and abused by unrighteous Judges in this World, when they shall find themselves to be righted by him that judgeth righteously : and he has pity upon the Poor and Fatherless ; when such as have been Persecutors of his poor Members, shall feel the smart of it ; as Dives was when Lazarus was received into Abraham's Bosom. What a Comfort, I say, will it be to the poor oppressed Suitor to have the Judge say, *Well done Thou good and faithful Servant, come Enter into thy Masters Joy.*

Use 2. This should make the Godly to bear all their Sufferings with Patience, for the Lord saith, *Vengeance is mine, and I will repay it.* And St. James saith, *Be ye also patient, and settle your Hearts, for the Coming of the Lord draweth near.*

Use 3. This conforms the Truth of Solomon's Word's, *Pro. 11. 18. The Wicked worketh a deceitful Work,* to perswade themselves that they may sow Iniquity, and yet expect to reap Happiness : Whereas the Word of the Apostle, *Gal. 6. 8. is grounded upon Truth, He that soweth to the Flesh, shall of the Flesh reap Corruption: but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit, reap Life Everlasting.* And *Hebrews 12. 18. the same Apostle saith, Without Holiness, no Man shall see God.*

Use 4. Seeing Christ comes with Majesty, not as a Mediator, but as a Judge ; This should admonish

The admonish us to repent, and seek the Lord while he may be found, and so call upon him while he is near, Isa. 55. 6. In this World Christ came to us by his Ministers in Mercy to invire us to Repentance, but in the World to come he will not come as Mediator, but as a Judge full of Power and Glory; so that you see, if we die in our Sins, there is no Hopes of Mercy after our Death, for as Death leaves thee, so shall Judgment find thee. Therefore it highly concerns every Man to put on the *White Robe*, the Garment of Righteousness while it is Day, lest Darkness come upon him unawares, and it is too late to get Oil, and light his Lamp to attend the Bridegroom.

And one Setting thereon.

The Person of the Judge described.

I come now to speak more particularly of the Judge, whom St. John fully describes, Rev. 14. 14. *I saw a White Cloud, and one sitting on it like the Son of Man, having on his Head a Golden Crown, and in his Hand a sharp Sickle.*

Doct. 4. *Christ the Judge at the last Day.*

Christ has a Right to be Judge in several Respects; as First, Being Redeemer of the World; and Secondly, in regard to his Church, of which he is the Head; and Thirdly, As a Priest, and Prophet, as well as a King, a true High Priest, who offered up himself one for all, for the Sins of the Whole World, a true Prophet in whom was contained all the Council of God,

God, and as a King, when he comes to set on his Throne, to Judge the Quick and the Dead, *John. 1. 22. The Father judgeth no Man, but hath committed all Judgment to the Son.* And though it is said, *1 Cor. 6. 2. that the Saints shall judge the Word, the Apostle only means, that they shall appear, applaud; and approve the righteous Judgment of Christ, triumphing that his and their Enemies are put under his Feet, and that all Power is given in Heaven and in Earth to him.*

When *Christ Jesus* lived on Earth he came in Misery, very poor and meek, so that every sinful Wretch durst mock him, and spit in his Face; *Herod, Pontius Pilate, Caiaphas,* and all the Jews used him at their Pleasure: But at his Coming to Judgment he shall come as a King, guarded and attended with many Thousand of Heavenly Saints and Angels, when all his Enemies shall tremble and quake, *Zach. 12. 10. as they did, when they cry'd, Away with him, away with him, Crucify him, Crucify him,* may his Blood light upon us and our Children; which it has sufficiently done, for they are as Vagabonds on the Face of the Earth to this Day.

This should administer Comfort to those who have led Godly Lives, that One who is thoroughly acquainted with our Sufferings, is now to judge us in Truth and Uprightness, so that none but those who have wounded Him by their wilful Sinning against the Light of Grace, need be afraid of this Judgment. Which made Holy Job take Heart in the midst of all

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his Miseries and say, I know that my Redeemer liveth; the Consideration of which should be a Terror to all wicked Sinners that live in Sin, to think of his Coming in Glory, whom they have despitefully used, and whose Gospel they have trodden under Foot, *For he shall come with a sharp two-edged Sword to cut in Pieces, and a consuming Fire to burn up all the ungodly Sinners,* Heb. 12. 29. which is enough to strike into the Hearts of all wicked Men, when they shall see him whom they have pierced, as the Prophet saith.

Let every Man consider this betimes, for as a Snare this Day shall come on us unawares, for why should any treasure up Wrath against the Day of Wrath. Christ is to be Judge of the World, which as it may add Terror to the Wicked, and those that go on in a Course of Sin, so it administers Comfort to those that lead G dly Lives; since one who is thoroughly acquainted with our Sorrows, is to judge us in Truth and Uprightness. Most think it will go hard with Cain, Pharoah, Pilate, and Judas in that Day, and why not with them, if they resist the Grace that is now offered to them in the Gospel: for be assured, if we draw our Love and Obedience from God, he will withdraw his Blessing from us.

From whose Face fled.

Severity of the Judge described.

From whose Face fled away both the Earth and the Heavens, and their Place was no more found. And in another Place we read, that the Heavens

are not pure in his Sight, how much more is the Earth polluted by the Sins of Men, for whose sake it was cursed of God, upon the first Transgression of Man in Paradise, which shews the wonderful Severity of the Great Judge of Heaven and Earth, at whom we cannot wonder that they should fly, because he is Purity it self, and cannot delight in any impure thing. But this mention'd the rather, to express the Severity of the Judge, than that things insensible, can have any Reason to fear. For when God descended on Mount *Sinai* to give the Law, we read the Mountains quaked and trembled exceedingly; and in other Places, how the Rocks rent before him as he passed by, and the Hills were moved at his Presence. And at his dying on the Cross, how the Foundations of the Earth shook, and the Rocks rent, and tore the Veil of the Temple, and the Light of the Sun was darken'd, and the Saints arose from their Graves. And what then must happen, when he appears in all Power and Glory? Certainly then it is no Wonder, if the affrighted Elements then fly, and give place to the Terror of his Judgment, since the Son of Man has scatter'd an Infection over the whole Creation.

We are afraid of the Plague, because it infects Men's Bodies, but the Plague of Sin is a thousand times more to be abhorr'd, for it infects both Body and Soul. The Remembrance of which, should make us be wary, how we mispend our time, the Thoughts of which kept holy *David* in such Awe, that he repented

him

him of the Evil, and the Lord forgave him; I have feared thy Judgments, thy Judgments were always in my Sight. It is a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of the living God, yet if we repent, he will forgive, for he doth not willingly afflict the Children of Men. The Ninevites experienced his Mercy, in the Warning he gave them by *Jonah*; and it were to be wish'd that we were like them, and would repent, and not deny Christ Entrance, when he stands at the Gate of our Hearts and knocks.

Observe, Seeing both Heaven and Earth shall fly from the Presence of *Jesus Christ*, we ought not to dream away our Lives, but repent before it is too late; for unless ye repent, ye shall likewise perish. For the Psalmist saith, *A Fire shall devour before him, and a mighty Tempest shall be moved round about him*, *Psal. 11. 2.* yet so merciful is he, that he gives Warning before he strikes.

2dly, Seeing that Heaven and Earth shall fly at his Presence, who have not sinned, what shall wicked and hard-hearted Sinners do? Where shall Blasphemers and Adulterers go, when the Judge is their Enemy? the Scripture in diverse Places declare the Severity of the Judge, *2 Theff. 1. 8.* He shall come in a Flame of Fire rendering Vengeance. And many of them which sleep in the Dust of the Earth shall awake, &c. some to Shame and Tribulation, Anguish and Sorrow, shall be upon every one that doth Evil, *Rom. 2. 9.* And the Companions the Wicked shall have in the other World, are even the Devil and his Angels, &c. *Mat. 25. 41.*

Ver. 11. *And I saw the Dead both great and small.*

I have already described the Person of the Judge, by his wonderful Majesty and Power. I come now to shew you who they are that shall appear before this great Judge; who are not those alone that shall be found actually dead, and raised at that Day, but even the Living that then shall be found; for Jesus Christ shall judge both the Quick and the Dead, as St. Paul saith, *We shall not die, but be exchanged*. For if the Dead who have been rotten many thousand Years, shall appear and stand before God, much more they which be living, when Christ shall come to Judgment. So then it is plain, altho' St. John in the Text speaks only of the Dead, yet all, both Quick and Dead, shall appear and stand before his Throne.

I saw the Dead, &c.

Do St. 5. *Men shall be raised out of the Dust at last.*

The Lord killeth (saith Hannah in her Song,) and maketh alive, bringeth down to the Grave, and raise th up, 1 Sam. 2. 6. I am sure, saith Job, that my Redeemer liveth, and that I shall stand the Last Day on the Earth; and though Worms destroy my Body, yet I shall see God in my Flesh. We must not think, that our long lying in the Grave, can hide us from the general Resurrection. It is not the Stubble shall hide Saul, nor the Ground

Ground Achan's Sin, Cain shall rise with Abel, Herod with John the Baptist, Felix with Paul Moses and Pharoah.

Then will it be the time that Conscience will accuse such as refus'd to hearken to her Dictates; the *Gentiles* shall rise up against the *Jews*, and the Heavens and the Earth, and the Works that are therein shall Witness against us, and we shall weep and howl, and would give all that ever we were worth in the World, for one Hour's time to repent, and make our Reconciliation with God, whom we have afore neglected.

The Doctrine of the Resurrection is so fully made out both in the *Old* and *New Testament*, that all must acknowledge it, and believe it shall be as God hath appointed it at the Last Day.

The Prophet Daniel saith, That they that sleep in the Dust shall awake, some to everlasting Life, and some to everlasting Shame, Dan. 12. 2. And St. John saith, The time shall come in which all that are in the Graves shall hear his Voice, and they shall come forth; and they that have done good, shall go unto the Resurrection of Life, and they that have done evil unto the Resurrection of Condemnation, John 5. 28. Which is confirm'd by St. Paul, 1 Cor. 15. 51. Behold I shew you a Mystery, we shall not all sleep, but that we shall be changed, and that in the twinkling of an Eye, at the Sound of the last Trumpet; for as by Sin came Death, so by Death came Life. And thereunto St. Austin saith, He that liveth well, cannot be afraid to die, nor doubtful of his Resurrection. And in short

we all confess *the Resurrection of the Dead*, as one of the most principle Articles of our Faith, and that the *Godly* and *Wicked* shall both arise; but with this Difference, the one shall rise to *Life Eternal*, and the other to *Eternal Destruction*, which to them cannot be called a *Resurrection*, any more than taking of a Malefactor out of Prison to be executed, can be called a *Delivery*: But it shall be with them, as with *Pharaoh's Servants*, both were taken out of Prison, the one to be restored to his Office, and the other to be executed.

What manner of Persons ought we then to be, in all holy Conversation, exhorting one another to Repentance? Both Poor and Rich, Minister and People, that by the Grace of God we may be enabled to lead a new Life; and with *St. Paul*, be careful to keep a Conscience void of Offence, both towards God and towards Man, 2 Cor. 1.

Use 1. It is a great Joy to the Godly, that they shall rise again, and a Terror to the Wicked, because they shall be punished; and well were it for them, if their Souls were as the Souls of Beasts, and should never rise; and therefore *St. John* saith, *He saw the Dead both small and great stand before God*, all must rise to Honour or Dishonour, to Salvation or Damnation.

Use 2. In this Day, both Great and Small, High and Low, Rich and Poor, shall appear; and the only Difference will be, the Concern to be weighed in the Ballance, whether they have been Good or Evil; if they are found Weight in the Scale of Justice, they shall ascend

shall ascend in Triumph with their Redeemer, to sing *Hallelujahs* World without End: But if wanting, they shall descend into the dismal Regions of Darkness, *wher shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth*, and that for ever and ever to all Eternity. As the Thoughts of which, should be a Terror to all godly People, so it should be Matter of Comfort to all poor Members of *Christ Jesus*. In this Life, the Godly undergo many Miseries; as holy *Job*, who said to Corruption, *thou art my Mother*, and to the Worm, *thou art my Sister and Brother*; and yet *St. Ambrose* saith, *He had within him a Soul full of sweet Ointment, which was full of sweet Savour in the Nostrils of God.*

Use 3. By all which you see, our Bodies shall arise, not weak and lame, but sound and glorious Bodies, having no Pain or Grief, as *St. Mat.* saith, *27. 52. And the Graves were opened, and many of the Saints Bodies that slept arose; and came out of the Graves after the Resurrection, and went into the holy City of Jerusalem..* But as for the Ungodly, it is not so with them, they shall arise, but only to go into eternal Torments, even Hell fire. Which it were to be wished, all Men of any Degree would consider, while it is yet Day, before Darkness come upon them, and it is too late to repent, and turn unto the Lord our God.



T H E

Last Great Assize.

The Second Sermon.

Rev. 20 12. &c.

12. *And I saw the Dead both small and great, stand before God, and the Books were opened, which is the Book of Life: And the Dead were judged out of those things which were written in the Books, according to their Deeds.*



Have already describ'd with what Majesty and Glory, the Judge shall come to the Comfort of the Godly, and Amazement of the Wicked, and who they are that must appear, both *Small and Great*. All must arise in their Native Strength and Beauty, as *Adam* was created at, which was a perfect Man.

Man, about thirty Years old, or at the Age of our Saviour, when he died upon the Cross, which was about thirty-three Years of Age ; for it cannot be imagin'd, that Infants dying in their Minority shall so rise or that aged and decrepid Persons shall rise, in their Imbecillity, who must be enabled to undergo the Eternity of Happiness or Misery, which all Authors agree shall be over the Valley of *Jehosaphat*, by Mount Olivet, which is near unto *Jerusalem*, eastward from the Temple. And as *Cosmographers* describe it to be in the midst of the Earth, which is very probable for four Reasons :

First, The Scripture says, *I will gather together all Nations into the Valley of Jehosaphet, and plead with them there*, Joel 3. 1, 2. *Cause the mighty one to come down, O Lord, Let the Heathen be awaked, and come up to thee Valley of Jehosaphat, for there will I sit, and judge all the Heathen round about*, Joel 3. 11, 12.

Secondly, Because our Saviour was there Crucified ; so over this Place, his Throne shall be erected, when he sits in Judgment, to manifest his Power and Glory : As also near unto this Valley was Mount *Moriah*, when *Abraham* would have sacrific'd his Son *Isaac*, Gen. 22. And here *Jacob* saw the Angels ascending and descending on a Ladder, Gen. 32. And the Angel put up his Sword, And Fire from Heaven burnt the Sacrifice in *Araunah's* Floor, 2 Sam. 14. And here *Solomon* built the Temple, 2 Chron. 3. 1. likewise in this Place Christ preach'd the Gospel, and suffer'd before he enter'd into Glory.

Thirdly, It is very probable that the Place where the Angels shall be sent to gather together all the Elect, from one End of the Heavens to the other, is to be near to *Jerusalem* in the Valley of *Jehosaphat* over the *Amorites*, *Moabites*, and those of Mount *Seir*, which is a Type of that final Victory, which Christ shall give his Elect over all their Enemies.

Fourthly, Because the Angels told the Disciples, that as they saw Christ ascend from Mount *Olivet*, which is over the Valley of *Jehosaphat*, so in like Manner he should come down from Heaven enthron'd amidst the *Cherubims*, attended with ten thousand times ten thousand *Saints* and *Angels*, who shall gather us from all Nations, even from the four Winds of Heaven.

Books, What is meant by them, every Man's Conscience.

Thy Conscience is the Book that shall be opened, and that shall be as good as ten thousand Witnesses, either to excuse or accuse thee before God; for as God hath his Book of Infinite Knowledge, whereby he knows the very Secrets of all Hearts, so likewise he has given to every Man and Woman a Book, which is their own Conscience, wherein are written all our Thoughts Words and Actions.

Holy *David* acknowledg'd this, when he said, *Tbou, O Lord, knowest the Thoughts of my Heart long before I utter them.* And with this Book of the Law given to *Moses* as a Rule and Guide to walk by, which is call'd a Book of Remembrance,

brance, by which all our Actions must be tried and examined. And then the Book of our own Conscience shall be opened, which is now so clos'd up in our Breasts, that no Eye on Earth but our own knows and perceives; and when these Books are opened and strictly compar'd, we shall find our Sins do agree in every Tittle. And then follows the Book of Judgment, which the comfortable or terrible Sentence will be pronounc'd by. And after these the Book of Life, in which all our Names are enclosed, in which all their Names are written that shall be pronounc'd good and faithful Servants, which cannot be chang'd or defac'd by time; and this was the Book which Moses's Zeal did desire. that his Name might be blotted out, rather than his Master's Name should be blasphem'd.

Thus kind is God to us, and careful of us, that he keeps every thing so just, that no Wrong can be done us, for we have all the Priviledge imaginable to do our selves Justice. First, The Book of the Law, shewing us what we should do, and then the Book of our own Conscience, shewing us what we have done: Against the first of these, no Man or Woman can except; for as David saith, *The Commandments of the Lord are pure, and righteous altogether*, Psal. 16. And for the Second, It being always in our own keeping, who can say against that, seeing the Lord will then judge a Man, not by another Man's Conscience, but by his own, wherein nothing can happen, but what we must be knowing of our selves.

Doct.

Doct. i. *All our Thoughts, Words, and Works must come to Judgment.*

I come now to the Doctrinal Part of the Text, to shew that all our Thoughts, Words, and Actions must come to Judgment; for every Man's Book shall be open'd, in which are set down even the Thoughts of our Hearts; there is none so secret or so close, but it is recorded in this Book of Conscience, as is also every idle Word that we speak, and Act that we do, tho' never so closely done. As Job on this Account saith, *Thou hast sealed up all over Sins in a Bag*, which plainly demonstrates a kind of keeping them against the Day of Accounts, even all the Sins that we now make so light of, either in Thought, Word, or Action, will be produced against us so plainly, that none dare deny the Accusation, because our Consciences will come in Evidence against us.

How many wicked and vile Thoughts have a wicked Man, and an unchaste Woman in their Minds Night and Day, which are all written in, this Book of Conscience. Which made holy David look upon it as a great Mercy, that God had given him a Sight of his Sins, *Thou hath set my Misdeeds before me*, saith he, *and my secret Sins in the Sight of thy Countenance*, which is what every one of us should do, who have put far away from us the evil Day; but know ye, the Account of them will not be so passed over, when the Secrets of all Hearts shall be laid open, and whatever has been done in secret, shall be publish'd on the House-Top and
come

come to light. Which if we did but consider, how watchful should we be over our Hearts and Lips, that we offend not in Thought or Word, much more in Deed. How many Sins that pass by unregarded, would then be taken Notice of, and more care would be taken to avoid them, lest they rise up against us at the great and terrible Day of the Lord's Coming to judge the World.

Secondly, our Speeches are noted in this Book as well as our Thoughts, and yet what a Number of prophane Words pass out of the Mouths of ungodly Men and Women, what horrible and blasphemous Oaths? What cursed Speaking, Lying and Slandering? all which are written in this Book, which when it is opened, it will discover all, not only our filthy Thoughts, but every wicked Word.

Our Saviour tells us, *Matth. 12. 35.* That we must give an Account of every idle Word at the Day of Judgment, which although Men strive to forget, yet they are written in their Consciences, and one Day must come to Judgment, and then give an Account of all our Actions, whether they have been good or bad, all must appear, *2. Cor. 5. 20.* and give an Account to this Judge.

And if so, what manner of Men ought we to be in Holiness and Righteousness of Life; for Conscience is so tender, that if it be pricked by Sin, it will be blemish'd and wounded, and therefore we ought to take Care that Sin gets no Entrance into our Hearts, lest it make Havock of our Souls. And in this Case, *Solomon*
gives

gives us a very necessary Caution, when he saith, *Counter guard thy Heart, and watch over thy Soul, Prov. 4. 4. that thou do not any thing that may wound thy Conscience.*

Thirdly, If we look into the Word, we shall find most Men's Lives are almost nothing else but a continual Course of Sin, which though they are as innumerable as the Sand on the Sea-shore, yet many Men never mind them, but they shall be all written in the *Book of Conscience*, and come to Judgment, though committed never so secret; for Conscience puts them all down against the Day of Accounts. There is no Sin so secret, that will not be brought to light as the wise Man saith, *What has been done in Secret shall be published on the House-tops, and shall come to Light, Eccl. 12. 14.* And for this Reason,

First, Because it makes the Sinner the more ashamed and tormented, but the more he perceives his Sins, the more it will vex him; as a Man who is in Debt, the more he thinks of it, the more it troubles him.

Secondly, That they may have no Excuse, or Cloak for their Sin, and say, *Lord, when saw we thee an hungry, &c.* the Lord convicts them before he condemns them. From which we might observe, the endless Love of God towards Man, who forewarns him of all these things, to the end that he might prevent the Danger that he is in, and keep a Conscience void of Offence towards God and towards Man.

Thirdly, To take heed of falling into lesser Sins, because they usher in greater, for the least

least of which, were not his Mercy infinite, he might justly destroy us. Paul complains of this, and Peter bids Simon Magus to repent and pray, if perhaps the Thoughts of his Heart may be pardoned. How careful ought we then to be of our Thoughts, and much more of our Words, seeing we must give Account for all, and our Consciences will bear Witness against us; and with holy David, to desire the Lord, Not to enter into Judgment with thy Servant, for in thy Sight no Man living shall be justified. And St. Austin saith, I want Mercy, and as a Fugative I return and seek for Peace, and I confess I am not worthy to be called thy Creature, my Conscience tells me so, which is a Witness that I daily and hourly carry about me.

Fourthly, Seeing every Man's Conscience is his Book, we may see the woful Misery of all those who have defiled their Consciences; for as their Consciences do accuse them, even so will God condemn them; and if so, what manner of Men then ought every one of us to be in all Holiness of Life. But alas, who thinks of this till its too late, it doth not so much as enter into our Hearts; for if it did, Men would not lye, steal, swear, and commit Adultery as they do. We pity Men who have a bad Cause to try before a righteous Judge, and never consider what Account we have ourselves to make at this Day of the great Assize of all the World.

Fifthly, Seeing the Book must be opened, and every Man's Conscience must come to scanning, how should this cause us all to have a good Conscience, and entreat the Lord to exhibit

hibite into our Minds the certain Testimony of his saving Grace, which he hath begun to work in us, that we may do that which is pleasing in his Eyes, to walk in his Commandments, and to keep his Judgments, and so being made Partakers of Christ's Righteousness, we may have the Books of our Consciences found perfect, and our Misdeeds cancelled, so that we may cry *Abba Father*, which we cannot do, but by having a Conscience void of Offence towards God and towards Man.

The best Means therefore to preserve a good Conscience, is carefully to keep that Book of Account, by which we must be judg'd: And to do this, there are two things required, *First*, To avoid all things that may prejudice a good Conscience. *Secondly*, To be careful to use all good Means and Helps that may cherish it. And so to take care of not falling into any Sin, be it never so small, seeing lesser Sins usher in greater, and for the least, were not God's Mercy infinite, he might justly destroy us; for who can stand before him in the great Day of Account.

There are also two especial Lets and Hindrances of a good Conscience, *First*, Ignorance of the Law and Word of God, for when a Man is ignorant what is Sin, how then can he take heed lest he wound his Soul. We must remember that the Wages of Sin is Death, and that eternal, both of Body and Soul; for till we are mindful of the Curle due to Sin, we can never repent us of Sin, and be so grieved for our Sins, as to hunger and thirst after Christ

Christ Jesus, whose Blood applied to our Souls by Faith, can only purify the Conscience, and quiet the Heart.

Secondly, The Hindrances of a good Conscience is worldly Lust, as the Love and Desire of Riches, Pleasure, Honour, &c. which being grounded in our Hearts, hinder the keeping a good Conscience, to prevent which, let us be careful to do every thing that may cherish true saving Faith in us, whereby our Souls may be assured of the Love of God in Jesus Christ for the Pardon of our Sins; and to preserve in this Faith, we must often hear and read the Word of God, which will instruct us how to repent sincerely of past Sins, and take care not to commit any more for the future, but continue to walk in the Paths of Faith and true Repentance, to the increase of a good Conscience, and the saving our immortal Souls.

When a Man is thus truly humbled for his Sins, and beggeth of God to forgive him with Sighs and Groans, then will the Lord send forth into his Soul, his blessed Spirit to assure him of God's Mercy, of the pardon of his Sins, and that our Wounds in Conscience are healed. But alas! We find most Men in this wicked and adulterous Generation, lead such Lives, as if they knew not what Sin is, and therefore cannot possibly have a clear Conscience, for *whatsoever is not of Faith, is Sin*. Although I am persuaded, that there is not so wicked a Sinner living, but at sometimes his Conscience checks him.

When.

When a Man has got a good Conscience, and is truly humbled for his Sins, and finds that his Conscience doth not accuse him, even then he must take no less Pains to preserve it. O Lord, saith David, *a wounded Conscience who can hear?* A Man's Conscience is like the Apple of his Eye, prick it but with a Pin, and it will endanger the Sight; so prick the Conscience with Sin, and it will make havock of the Soul, And therefore Solomon saith, *Counterguard thy Heart, and watch over thy Soul.* Prov. 4. 6.

It is requisite therefore to walk with God, by Example, as did Enoch and Elias, so to order our Lives, as if we were always in the Presence of God; for whatsoever we may think, his All-seeing Eye is ever-looking into our Thoughts and Actions, when we least imagine he beholds us; and though he for a Season delays to punish Sinners, yet most certainly the Day will come, when we least think of it, and it will fall heavy upon us in the End. Which to have always in our Thoughts, is the ready way to make us keep a good Conscience, the want of which emboldens Men in Sin, because they consider not, that God sees them, and that they have a Conscience within to witness against them at the last Day.

And another Book was opened, which is the Book of Life.

What is meant by the Book of Life?

The meaning of this Book is, that when Christ the Judge has examin'd the Book of

Men's

Men's Consciences, to view what is therein written and found that according to their Evidence, as it testifies Good or Evil, Judgment may accordingly be awarded; and now he sheweth that he will open a second Book, and this Book is even the Book of Life, which is so often made mention of in the Old and New Testament, as that of Moses, *Exod. 32. 31, 32.* *Oh this People have sinned a great Sin, therefore now if thou pardon their Sins, thy Mercy will appear; but if thou wilt not, I beseech thee rase me out of the Book which thou hast written, And David saith Psal. 69. 28.* Let them be blotted out of the Book of the Living, and not be written with the Righteous. And *Rev. 3. 5.* *He that overcometh shall be covered with white Rayment and I will not blot out his Name out of the Book of Life.* And the Holy Ghost speaking of the heavenly Jerusalem, saith, *There shall in no wise enter into it, any thing that defileth or worketh Abomination, or maketh a Lie: But they which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.* Now this Book of Life so often made mention of in the Holy Scriptures, can be nothing else but God's eternal Council Purpose and Decree, to the Faithful in Christ Jesus, on whom he will bestow eternal Life and Happiness; for we must not imagine that God has need of any Book, but he only expresses it thus for our Understanding: As a Captain recordeth the Names of his Soldiers, or as the Names of the Magistrates are recorded in Cities, so God has enrolled the Names of all his Saints in the Book of Life, so that not one of them shall perish.

Doct. 1. Thus having explain'd what is meant by this *Book of Life*, it is next to be considered what is to be learn'd from hence, which is this, that we know assuredly, that God has a *Book of Life* upon which the Names of his Chosen are written, and who is able to call over his Servant by their Names; for Christ is the true Shepherd of his Flock, and they are always number'd before him, *I am, saith he, the good Shepherd, I know my Sheep, and I am known of them,* John 10. 14. for the Knowledge of God is so truly exact and perfect, that nothing is so secret that is hid from him, *He searcheth the Heart, he trieth the Reins, and understandeth the Heart long before his Eyes are like a Flame of Fire, and his Feet like fine Brass,* Rev. 2. 18.

What are the Uses.

Use 1. Now as for the Uses of these Considerations, we may behold the Blessed and happy Estate of all the *Elect and Chosen Children of God*; for all these are written in the *Book of Life*, and so consequently blessed and happy for ever, *If thy Name be written in the Book of Life, thou should never perish.* For Christ will not blot out their Names that are there written, but own them before his Father, who is in Heaven, and there prefer them to Honour and Glory, and to endless Joy and Comfort; *whom God loveth once, he loveth to the End.* But miserable and wretched is the State of those whose Names are not found to be written in this *Book of Life* in the Last Day; for they shall not enter into the Joy of the New Jerusalem, but be utterly

utterly excluded from all Happiness and Comfort. However, let none be too secure, that their Names are written in this Book, and rely upon that only for their Salvation, doing otherwise as themselves list, lest in the End, they find themselves miserably mistaken and deceived. Take heed I say with *St. Paul*, that *evil Communication do not corrupt good Manners*, for although God has made us without our Help, or whether we will or no; for if he hath elected any Man to eternal Life, he hath ordained that they shall walk circumspectly in the way leading thereunto, so that by their good Works which others Behold, they may glorify their Father which is in Heaven, it being impossible that a good Man can lead a wicked Life, and live and die therein. And therefore they that imagine they be the Children of God, and their Names are written in the Book of Life, that they may live as they please, do cast away their Souls, and like *Cain* and *Judas* are their own Judges and Executioners. For as God has ordained some Men to eternal Happiness, and written their Names in Heaven, so he hath appointed them the way to walk in, and bring them to it.

Use 2. It is plainly told us, that God has a Book wherein all the Names of the Elect are written, yet it is Presumption in any one to presume to say, he is certain his Name is set down therein, if he lead a sinful Course of Life, or neglects to work out his own Salvation with Fear and Trembling. We find our Blessed Saviour, when his Disciples rejoiced, because the Devils

Devils were subdued and cast out by them; say, Nay, rather rejoice, because your Names are written in the Book of Life. This indeed is a Joy, far exceeding all other Joys; and yet many rather rejoice to be the Son of a rich Man, a Gentleman, or Nobleman, to have Gold and Silver, Lands and Livings, which often makes them so lofty and proud, that they forget God and a good Conscience, which must be their only Comfort upon a Death-bed, *But who is he that rejoiceth in this, that he is the Son of God, and his Name is written in the Book of Life, which is a Joy indeed, and yet we find, but few rejoicing at this great Benefit, of being a Child of God, and that his Name is written in the Book of Life.*

If we set Bounds to our Love to God, or to our Service to God, or if we limit our selves to our Obedience to the Holy Ghost, love one Command and slight another, obey in one Point, and yet lie cross in another, then is all we do, but a serving God in Part, and hastening to our own Destruction, for our Conscience tells us, we ought to serve him with all our Might and Power: But if we love the Lord with our whole Heart and whole Soul, and serve him with all our Might and Strength; if we esteem all God's Precepts concerning all things to be right, and have respect to all his Commands, then we may be ascertain'd that our Names are written in the Book of Life.

What Conscience is.

If I set Bounds to my Love to God, or to my Service to God ; if I limit my self in my Obedience to the Holy God, love one Command and slight another, obey in one Point, and offend in another, it is all but the working of a *Natural Conscience*. But on the other hand, if we love the Lord with our whole *Heart*, and whole *Soul*, and serve him with all our *Might and Strength*, Matt. 22. 37. And if we esteem all God's Precepts. concerning all things to be right, and have respect unto all the Commands, then is our Love and Service from a renewed Conscience.

If a carnal Man's Conscience check or accuse for Sin, then he seeketh to stop the Mouth of it, but not to reform it ; for such Men's Business is to still Conscience, when ever it flies in their Faces, and accuses them : But the true Believer chusest rather to let Conscience cry, than to stop the Mouth of it, until he can do it upon good Terms, and can fetch in Satisfaction to it, from the Blood of *Jesus Christ*, by fresh Acts of Faith apprehended and applied.

The wicked Man seeketh to still the Noise of Conscience, rather than remove the *Guilt* ; but the Righteous seeketh the Removal of *Guilt* by the Application of *Christ's Blood*, and then Conscience is quiet of it self. As a foolish Man, having a Mote fallen into his Eye, and making it water, he wipeth away the Water, and labours to keep it dry, but never searcheth his Eye to get out the Mote ; but a wise Man mind-
eth

eth not so much the wiping, as the searching the Eye, some what is got in and that causeth the watering, and therefore the Cause must be removed.

Now then, if when Conscience accuseth for Sin, I take up a Form of Godliness to stop the Mouth of Conscience, and if hereupon Conscience be still and quiet, then is this but a wicked Conscience: But if when Conscience checks, it will not be satisfied with any thing but the Blood of Christ, and thereupon I use Duties to bring me to Christ, and if I beg the springling of his Blood upon my Conscience, and labour not so much to stop the Mouth of it, as to remove guilt from it, then is this a renewed Conscience. And it is a Matter of endless Comfort to God's Children when they know this, *that they are the Children of God, and that eternal Life belongs unto them, it will stir them up to ob-y God with Joy and Chearfulness all the Days of their Lives.* But the wicked Man let him go never so far, let him do never so much in Matters of Religion, yet still he has a *Dalilah*, a Bosome Sin, which draws him off from God and Godliness.

If then we profess Religion, *If we make mention of the Name of the Lord and make our Boast of the Law, and yet through breaking the Law, dishonour God, Rom. 2. 23.* If we live in the love of any Sin, and make use of our Profession to cover it, then are we Hypocrites, and our Duties flow but from an evil Conscience: But on the other hand, if we name the Name of the Lord *Jesus*, and withal depart from Iniquity, if

we

we use Duties, not to cover, but to discover and to mortify Sin, then are we upright before God, and our Duties flow from a renewed Conscience. *David hated every false way, he regarded no Iniquity in his Heart, Psal. 66. 18.*

Marks of God's Children by the Spirit.

The first Mark whereby we may know whether we be elected or not, is the Witness of God's Spirit, and the Testimony of a good Conscience, *Ye have not received the Spirit of Bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry. Abba, Father. The Spirit it self beareth Witness with our Spirit, that we are the Children of God: And if Children, then Heirs; Heirs of God, and Joint-Heirs with Christ, Rom. 8. 16.* Wherein the Apostle saith, that wicked and ungodly Persons, who are not directed by the Spirit of God, but live in Sin, have no true Peace in their Souls; but on the other hand, the Children of God, have the Spirit of Adoption, which assures us of our Election, and makes it known unto us that we are the Sons of the Almighty. St. Peter admonishes, *To give all Diligence to make our Calling and Election sure, 1 Pet. 2. 20.* And our Blessed Saviour bids his Disciples, *Rejoyce that their Names are written in the Book of Life, John 19.* And the Articles of our Belief do confirm the same, which teacheth us to believe the *Catholick, Church*, and that we shall have *Life Everlasting*, which we may be assured of, if we have a lively Faith and Hope in him, and a firm Reliance upon him, and then we may address our selves

to his Mercy-seat with Comfort, and a sure Confidence in him.

And that no Man may deceive himself, St. Paul gives us two Signs to know whether we have the Testimony of the Lord's Spirit or no; it will make us cry unto God, and even fill Heaven and Earth with Sobs and Sighs for the Pardon of our Sins, as David did, who in the Sincerity of his Heart humbly confessed his Sins unto the Lord, which he left upon Record for us to imitate; This is very unlike to what many do now adays, who say they hope to be saved, and yet never pray to God for pardon of their Sins, but pass away their time in Sports and Pastimes.

The Second Means whereby we may know that our Names are written in the Book of Life, which very near concerns the Welfare of the Soul of every Man and Woman, is by the Word of God, which expressly tells us, *Whosoever believeth in Christ Jesus shall be saved*; And therefore it is necessary we should be mindful and attentive in hearkening unto the Word of God, that we may be able to try and prove ourselves, whether we be in the Faith or not; whether we be the Children of God or no; for a Child of God hearing this comfortable Doctrine open'd by God's Ministers, can safely say, I can apply this Promise to my self, as a Man or Woman that have true Faith, are certain they shall be saved; for we may know our Election by the Fruits it brings forth in our Lives and Conversation, as well as the Blessed Testimony of God's Holy Spirit, which cannot deceive;

receive; for the Fruits of Election are set down by the Holy Spirit, that all Men may be able to examine and try themselves, and know whether they be ordained to Life or not, *Rom. 8. 30. Whom he predestinated them he also called; and whom he also called, them he also justified, them he also glorified.* In which Words we may see the Marks of our Election; for all that are written in this Book are first called. Secondly Justified. And Thirdly Sanctified. So then if any Man would know whether he is elected to Life Eternal: Let him examine himself in these three Effects of his Election, whether he is called justified, and sanctified: and if so, then he is sure that he is elected, without which, no Man can be sure.

So that you see, the way to know this, is by descending into our selves, and looking on the Marks and Testimonies of our own Hearts, to prove that we are included in the Number of God's Elect; for as Solomon tells us, *As Water sheweth Face to Face, so even the Heart sheweth Man to Man, Prov. 27. 19.* For if we find written on the Tables of our Hearts, the true Marks and Token's of God's Children, then let us conclude that our Names are written in the Book of Life: But as for those who continue in Sin, they will find their Case to be very deplorable, and can only say to themselves, that their Souls totter on the Brink of Everlasting Destruction, into which, without God's infinite Mercy, they must be swallowed up at the last Day. St. Paul tells us, the wicked and ungodly Sinners who are destitute of the Spirit of God, to guide

them in the way of Truth, have only the Spirit of Bondage, *Rom. 8. 15.* But in the next Verse he saith, *They that are his Children, have Spirit of Adoption, which makes known unto them that they are his Elect*; for saith he, *His Spirit doth Witness to our Spirits, that we are the Sons of God, Rom. 8. 16.* And to prove it, he adds, that the Spirit of God makes all his chosen one's to be lowly and humble, meek and contrite, continually crying and praying unto God with Sighs and Tears, which God will not despise nor reject. So *David*, who was a Man after God's Heart, confess'd his Sins, watering his couch with Tears. But those whose Hearts are hardened, and cannot thus pray unto the Lord, but their Devotions seems tedious, wearisome and uneasy to them, are in a bad State, and have not the Spirit of God witnessing to their Spirit, and take more Pleasure in Sin, whose wages is Death, than in Godliness, which is great Gain.

When a Man comes to see his Sins, and God's Anger for them, he dislikes them, grieves for them, bewails them, and begs Pardon for them, and begins to become a new Man, to believe in Christ, and to seek after Happiness, as *Nicodemus* did, and is afraid to offend his heavenly Father; not so much out of Fear of Punishment for Sin, as out of filial Duty and Obedience to him, who so loved us from the Beginning. But then we must take heed that we deceive not our selves with an outward Calling, for our Saviour saith, *Many are called, but few are chosen.* Before a Man can be justified, he must

must repent him of his Sins, and then Christ will assure us of Pardon. And therefore if any wou'd know whether he is justified or not, he must first consider, whether he has repented so to be truly humbled for his Sins. And in the next Place, he must have a true Faith in Christ Jesus, to lay hold upon him, and wrestle with him, as *Jacob* did with the Angel, and not let him go till he gives him a *Blessing*.

The Third Fruit of *Election* is *Sanctification*, which consists in two Parts; *First*, to die to Sin. *Secondly*, To rise to Righteousness. If you hate your old Sins, and delight in Holy Duties, it is a true Sign that you belong to God; but if you do savour the things belonging to the Flesh, and desire the Garlick and Flesh-pots of *Egypt*, then you have no Assurance of Salvation.

Use 1. If thy Name is written in Heaven, nothing can hurt thee, though thou be Poor with *Job*, sick with *Hazekiah*, in Prison with *Joseph*, haled to Death with thy Saviour Christ, nothing can hurt thee; for if God justify, who can condemn.

Secondly, Seeing God has written down the Name of every Man and Woman that shall be saved in the Book of Life, and shew'd us the Way that leads to it, and unless we walk in that Way, we cannot come to it. It behoves every one of us to walk in that Way, which leadeth to Life, and not to serve Sin and Satan any longer, but labour to die to Sin, before we die to Nature, and bury Sin, before it buries us; for Sin brings nothing but Shame in this Life, and Perdition in the Life to come.

T H E



T H E

Last Great Assize.

The Third Sermon.

Rev. 20. 12, 13.

12. *And the Dead were judged out of the Book of those things which were written in the Books, according to their Works.*
13. *And the Sea gave up the Dead which were in it, and Death and Hell delivered up the Dead that were in them, and they were judged every Man according to their Works.*

AS for the Book of Life, I think I have sufficiently explain'd that it is the Counsel and Decree of God's Election, whereby he has chosen certain Men and Women out of the Lump of Mankind, who have their Names registred, that they may be admitted to eternal Life, which every one ought to be assured of, as they might

might certainly be, by the Marks set down in the Scripture, and by the Testimony of God's Spirit which cannot lie.

Secondly, By the Fruits and Effects of Election, as *Vocation*, *Justification*, and *Santification*, Love of one another, and Obedience to all the Commandments of God, and therefore it very much concerns every one of us, to endeavour with all over Might and Main to make our Calling and Election sure, or we cannot be saved, Behold, I give you Power to tread on Serpents and Scorpions, and over all the Power of the Enemy, and nothing shall by any Means hurt you, Notwithstanding in this rejoyce not, that the Spirits are subject unto you: But rather rejoyce, because your Names are written in Heaven, Luke 10. 19, 20. without which we can have no true Joy, to our Souls, notwithstanding we live in all the Splendour and Glory imaginable: Which most Men are very careful to mind, and at the same time neglect the most substantial Happiness, and saving their immortal Souls.

After what Manner all Men shall be judged.

St. John proceeds to describe the Last Judgment, as it was revealed to him in his wonderful Vision in the Isle of *Patmos*, where it was necessary to have it, because it was private and free from Company, and to solace him in that solitary Place, so that his Soul might the better be fitted with Comtemplation to receive the Power of God; for when the Help of Man is furthest off, then God is nearest. And the Manner he gives us of it is, That every Man shall

be judg'd according to those things which are written in the Book, according to our own Works.

It hath been already said, That he saw all both great and small stand before God. None shall be wanting at that Day, every Man's Book shall be opened, and every one's Conscience shall be tried by the things that are written in the Book, and nothing that is alledged shall be gain said: And although it might be wondred how so great a Multitude shall be judg'd, and every Man's Book shall be read, no, not one shall be wanting, altho' we see what along time it holds our Judges in this World, to try a few Persons, where there is such calling of Evidences, such producing of Witnesses, such preferring of Indictments, yet at the Day of Judgment, every Man's own Conscience shall either justify or condemn him in a Moment. When Christ Jesus the Great Judge, shall set upon the Throne of his Glory, attended by his Holy Angels, Saints, and Martyrs, then shall the Book of every Man's Conscience be opened, and according to those things which are in the Book, they shall afresh call to mind their former Sins which they have committed, and no one shall be able to contradict what he is accus'd of.

From which Words I shall observe these two things: *First*, Who they are that must come to Judgment, even the Dead both small and great, who have lain many thousand Years rotting in the Grave. And *Secondly*, That God would have us assured of the Day of Judgment.

1. For his Glory. 2. For our Comfort. 3. To keep us in Fear of him. 4. That all might be inexcusable.

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The First may serve to exercise our Patience, and to put a Bridle on all our Thoughts, Words, and Actions. Secondly, By hindring our Curiosity, to keep us within the Bounds of our Duty. To which end the Apostle saith, *Be ye always ready; for in such an Hour as ye think not of, the Son of Man cometh.* And Thirdly, The Means by which we must be tried, they are our Consciences, which are the Books of Record, that either excuse or condemn us at that Day. And Fourthly, The Touchstone of this Trial is the Word of God.

St. John saith, both small and great must stand before God, from whom nothing can be hid, and the Dead shall be judged, their long Continuance in the Grave cannot make them to be forgotten. They must then give an Account of their good and evil Deeds, though they have been ever so long ago, all shall appear open to his Eyes, to whom Darkness is as Light. And every Thought, Word, and Action shall be remembered that have been committed a thousand Years ago, of which we must give an Account, as well as a Malefactor that died but Yesterday. Tho' Cain be dead long since, yet his Sins are not dead. No more than Judas who betrayed his Master above seventeen hundred Years since, who will be called to an Account before him who sitteth on the Throne, and judgeth all according to their Works.

On the other Hand, those that have done well, and suffered for Righteousness sake, shall be rewarded, as the Apostle saith, *sitting upon twelve Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel, &c.*

not that they shall give Judgment, but only to accompany him to approve the Equity of his Judgment. A likeness whereof we have in these our earthly Judgments, where Justices and Men of Authority count sit with the Judge, not that they have to do in pronouncing Sentence or Judgment.

But those that have done Violence, and lived in a Course of Sinning, shall tremble with Horror at the expected Sentence, as we read *Luke 13. 18. There shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth* when their evil Consciences shall fly in their Faces, and bring in an Accusation against them. Then the *Usurer*, the *Drunkard*, the *Swearer*, the *Prophaner* of the Sabbath, who thought that Death would end all their Misery, will find themselves mistaken, when they see themselves along with *Dives*, seeing *Lazarus* in *Abraham's Bosom*, and with him they shall be tormented without Relief. And what will add to their Misery; will be to behold *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob* with the Apostles, Martyrs, and other Holy Men, entering into the Kingdom of Heaven, and advanc'd in Glory, whilst they are shut out themselves, and depriv'd of that Happiness, which they might so easily have obtained.

Then shall their Consciences accuse them, when they shall say within themselves, *These are they whom sometimes we had in Derision. These are they whom we wrong'd, and whom we so much oppress'd and scorn'd, and said unto our selves, We Fools thought their Lives Madness, and their Ends without Honour: But now we find they are counted amongst the Children of God, and their Portion is*

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among the Saints, and they are highly advanced in God's Favour. But we, alas! have not known the Ways of God, nor liv'd in his Fear, nor walk'd diligently with upright Conscience before him. Ah! poor Souls, they shall then wish for Death: But alas, alas, Death shall fly from them. Oh! it had been good for them, if they had never been born, or had rather been Toads and Serpents, for in Death these have an End: It is not so with the wicked Man, for when he is Dead, even then begins his greatest Misery.

Remember this then all of us in time, whilst the Golden Opportunity is held forth, for tho' thou die, yet thy Sins die not with thee, Remember, O young Man, that for all this, thou must come to Judgment, saith Solomon, even all old Sins that have been committed in Secret, will then come to Light. Oh, then let us watch over our Lives, and have this still in our Minds, that although we die and rot in the Grave, yet our Sins will not die, they must come to Light. For St. John tells us, that the Dead were judg'd, even those that were forgotten long ago, for God will bring every Work to Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil, Eccl. 12. 24. which must needs be a great Terror to the Wicked; but the Saints of God will be safe from this Fear, being comforted by a good Conscience, and the Assurance they have of Eternal Happiness, through the Merits and Mercies of Jesus Christ.

Now then, those who have good and holy Thoughts written in their Book of Conscience, shall be glad to have their Books laid open, wherein

wherein is found, Obedience, Repentance, Faith, Hope, Love, Zeal, Patience, &c. But Woe to the Adulterers, Fornicators, Murtherers, Liars, Swearers, and Blasphemers, For the Wages of such Sins is Death, and the Wrath and Curse of God upon them for ever.

No Excuse in the Word will serve to award or put off this Tryal, it will not do to say, I have married a Wife, and cannot come, or I have bought a Farm, or a Yoke of Oxen. Such Excuses will not do, come they must, and stand naked before the Judge, as our first Parents did, when God called them to Tryal for transgressing his Commandments, who upon their Tryal made vain and trifling Excuses, Adam saying, the Woman which thou gavest me, gave me of the Tree, and I did eat. And Eve thinking to escape after the like Manner, saith, The Serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. In like manner Saul made an Excuse, when he disobeyed God's Commandment, and said, I have obeyed the Voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag, the King of Amalek, and have destroyed the Amalekites: But the People took of the Spoil, Sheep and Oxen, and the chiefest of the Things, which should have been destroyed, to offer unto the Lord. As also Pilate, who against his own Judgment condemn'd Christ, and yet would excuse himself, by taking Water and washing his Hands, saying, I am innocent of the Blood of this just Man. But this would not do, every Man's Conscience will tell him otherwise. No fair Tales, but plain and naked Truths, when we shall not be able to answer one Word of a thousand,

land, but forc'd to confess our Misdeeds. And we shall not find as it is in this World, that we can hope to be forgiven, by asking Pardon, but then shall our Confession be to our open Shame and Confusion, because it occasions (by the means of those Sins we are compell'd to confess) our endless Destruction.

And then the Judge shall separate the one from the other, the just from the unjust, the Sheep from the Goats, *For he shall send forth his Angels, with the great Sound of a Trumpet, and they shall gather together his Elect from the four Winds, and from one End of Heaven to another, Mat. 24. 38.* Wherein it appears, all shall come, both the good and bad, before the Judge, and then shall the Just shine as the Sun, and be as it were by Proclamation, *Come ye Blessed, which makes St. Paul break out into these Words, Herein is the Law of God perfect towards us, that we shall have Boldness at the Day of Judgment.* This makes the Godly with the hastening of that Day and cry, *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.*

Seeing then, that there will be no Evidence wanting, and that every one carries it in his one Breast, and that we must give an Account to the Great Judge of all our Thoughts, Words, and Actions: What Account shall they give who have been idle Hearers, and idle Doers of his Word.

Use 1. This should teach us to be continually looking over the Book of Conscience in this Life, in order to correct and amend it, so that it may stand fair, when it shall come to be opened in the Life to come, which David advises.

vises us to, when he says, *I will take heed to my Ways that I offend not with my Tongue.* Let them who fear the Lord, and love their own Souls, take all care, to make their calling and Election sure. St. John tells us. *All must appear, at the Great Tribunal.* The Consideration of which, made St. Paul careful to keep his Conscience void of Offence, both towards God, and towards Man, Acts 21. because we must receive Judgment according to the Account written in that Book. Oh! that we might imitate that Blessed Apostle and would stir and endeavour that no filthy Sins blot our Books, but that we keep them fare and clean in the Sight of God, which we ought to do, above all things in the World, *for if our Hearts condemn us, God is greater than our Hearts, and will also condemn us,* 1. John 3. 20.

Use 2. Seeing that Sentence must pass according to things written in our Books, let us not only avoid evil Actions, but also evil Thoughts and Words, that will rise up against us at the last Day; for St. Paul saith, *Even Thoughts shall either excuse or accuse us.* Rom. 1. 20. By which you see, if we wou'd truly repent, we must repent of all our vain Thoughts and Imaginations, for where there no other Sins, these would rise up, and be a sufficient Evidence to convict us.

Let us not content our selves to imagine we are safe, if we can say with the Pharisees, *I am no Drunkard, nor Fornicator, nor Extortiner,* unless we can truly say, that there is not an idle Word unrepented of, for even they come to

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Judgment, for I say unto you, that every idle Word that Men shall speak, they shall give Account thereof in the Day of Judgment, Matt. 12. 36. And that we may know more perfectly the meaning of this, St. John saith, That we shall all be judged according to our Works, Rev. 20. 13. And St. Paul saith, 2 Cor. 22. 10. We must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his Body, according to that which he has done, whether it be good or evil. If thy works be good, thou hast Glory, but if thy Works be Evil, then Damnation. Good Works altho' they cannot merit, yet they will shew forth the Faith that lay in the Heart, for our Works shall follow us, when we rest from our Labour, and attend us in Life or Death; for which reason, the Day of Judgment may be properly called the Day of Revelation, wherein all hidden things shall be made known, and the dark Secrets and Counsels of the Heart shall be manifested, for then God shall judge the Secrets of Men by Jesus Christ, Rom. 2. 16.

Doct. I. Men shall be judged according to their Works.

From what has been said, we may see that all Men and Women shall come to Judgment, and be acquitted or condemned by their Works, for even Adam entailed Death upon his Posterity by eating the forbidden Fruit without Repentance, which had not been sufficient, had not the Son of God died to appease the Wrath of his offended Father, even so Man must endeavour by his Humility and Obedience, by his Works

Works of Mercy and Charity to procure to himself this Happiness, or else it will not avail him, for God is not unrighteous to forget your Works and Labour of Love. As it is said of Cornelius, That his Prayers and Alms came up for a Memorial before God. And as the Godly shall be rewarded according to their Works, so shall the Wicked, as their Deeds have been in the Flesh. These things hast thou done, and I kept Silence, thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself: But I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine Eyes, Psa. 20. 21. And again, I was an hungry, and ye said me not, &c.

Use 1. This ought to make us above all things to labour and abound in all Holy Duties and Graces of Gods Spirit, in Knowledge, Faith, Repentance, Love, Zeal, clothing, feeding, and lodging the poor, which Christ takes as done to himself, and according shall be our Reward as he saith, who is the Author of all Truth, Verily, Verily, of a Truth, thou shalt not lose thy Reward. Then how ought all Men to endeavour, that they may be blessed with such a Happiness, that Eye has not seen, nor Ear heard neither has it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive, when we may attain it at so small a Price, as doing good to our Fellow Creature; for altho' our good Works cannot merit, yet they shall be rewarded, they shall not be forgotten in the Day of Judgment. They are Sacrifices well pleasing to the Lord, and when all our Friends and Riches can do us no good, they will bring us Comfort in our greatest time of Need, and

and stop the Anger of an All-seeing Judge, who judgeth every one according to his Works.

What is spent in sensual Pleasure, brings a Sting with it to torment us in the End, being frequently attended with Punishments in this Life; but in the World to come, most certainly with Despair and endless Torments. The Remembrance of which, one should think, would teach us *First*, The Fear of God, not to Sin. *Secondly*, Faith in Christ, to receive eternal Life. *Thirdly*, Patience in Adversity, because after momentary Pain, succeeds everlasting Joy.

Doct. 2. Seeing all these things must come to pass, and that nothing shall go with us when we die, but our Conscience and our Works, what manner of Men ought we to be in all Godliness, *St. John* plainly tells us, that both the Quick and the Dead shall hear the Trumpet, and be gathered together to Judgment. *First*, By the powerful Voice of Christ, those that are in the Grave shall hear his Voice. *Secondly*, By the Ministry of Angels that shall gather the Elect from all Parts, the Sea, Death, the Grave, Fire, which Time and Nature consumed, shall give up their Dead, and obey the Voice of God, as at the Creation.

Doct. 3. Certainly, If Men would but seriously consider this, they would be wiser than to set their Hearts on things that cannot profit. What do Men desire? What do they hunger and thirst after? but for Pleasures, Profits, and Preferments. For these they spend their Labour, Wit, and Strength; but there is no Account of Prayer in their House, no De-
fire

fire to attain Knowledge, Faith and Repentance, no Conscience to live in the fear of God. Alas! They never think of these things, but all their Desire is for the things of this World. But poor Soul, thou canst not take one Piece of Gold or Silver with thee, but all must be left behind, and only thy Conscience, and thy Works must accompany thee.

Let us not then let our Hearts too much up on those things, which cannot profit us in this fiery Day of Tryal: But let us enter into Covenant with the Lord, to strive against the Corruptions of our own Hearts, wherein we have most dishonoured the Lord, and let us see our Covenant be kept and continued as much as in us lieth; and let us all remember the Words of the Prophet *Esdra*s, in his Second Book, Chap. 7. 32. *The Earth shall restore those that have slept in her, and the Most High shall appear upon the Seat of Judgment, and Miseries shall vanish away, and Long-suffering shall have an End; Justice only shall continue, the Truth shall remain, and Uprightness shall bear no more Rule.*

Let me therefore, in Bowels of Compassion entreat you, to consider in time the things that belong to your Peace, before it is too late, laying aside every Sin that doth so easily beset you, and so obtain the Crown; for those who do this, shall not miss of the Reward, which God has laid up for all those that love and fear him, and which is of more Value than ten thousand Worlds.

Now a Question may be ask'd, why St. John saith, *All must come to Judgment*, when our Saviour saith, *He that believeth, shall not come to*

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The Last Great Assize.

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Judgment but he that believeth not, is condemned already.

To which I answer, It is true, that the Faithful shall not come into Judgment, that is, of Condemnation, Rom. 8. 10. For their is no Condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit: But God will pronounce that Blessed Sentence, Come ye Blessed, &c. As for the Wicked they are condemned already; first in the Decree of God, as being Reprobates. Secondly, In the Word of God. And Thirdly, In their own Consciences. And so we are to understand the Saying of Solomon, Eccl. 3. 17. God shall judge the Just and the Unjust, the one to Salvation, and the other to Condemnation.

Now as to the third Point that I propos'd, which is the Touchstone of the Trial, whereby all Mens Thoughts, Words, and Actions, shall be tried. St. Paul tells us, At the Day of Judgment, God shall judge the Secrets of all Men's Hearts by his Gospel, Rom. 1. 16. And since it is so, how careful ought we to be, to read, and hear and understand his Law and Gospel, that all our Thoughts, Words, and Actions, shall be agreeable to what is commanded, so that we may be able to chuse that which is good, and eschew that that which is evil; for those who are ignorant of them, are but in a very bad Condition, as St. Paul tells us, That the Lord Jesus will come in flaming Fire, to take Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. And therefore as you love your Souls, love ye the Word of God, seek with all Diligence

Diligence to know it, which will stand thee in great stead in the Time of Need ; when thou shalt neglect it, it will stand against them to their Condemnation.

13. *And the Sea gave up the the Dead which were in her, and Death and Hell delivered up the Dead that were in them, and they were judged every Man according to their Works.*

It is a Matter beyond all dispute, that the Dead shall rise again. Those who have been eaten by Fish, Fowl, or wild Beast, and Men perhaps again have eaten them, and have been afterwards burnt to Ashes, which have been scatter'd over the Face of the whole Earth ; which makes the Atheists say, there shall be no Resurrection : But did he consider, there is nothing impossible with God, and that it was more difficult to create all things out of nothing than to gather together a little scatter'd Dust, and new form it again, he would not dare to dispute the Actions of Omnipotence, but rather believe it shall be so, because he that said it, is all Truth, and cannot lye. And this is an Article of our Faith, *We believe the Resurrection of the Dead*, which were it not so, all our Religion is in vain ; for his Resurrection was not only to expiate our Sins, but also to obtain Righteousness for us. Thus confident is Job in this, *I know my Redeemer liveth, whom mine Eyes shall behold.* And Isaiah saith, *The dead Man shall arise, even with my Body shall they arise, Awake and sing ye*

that dwell in the Dust, Isa. 26. 9. And the Apostle Paul saith, If there be no Resurrection of the Dead, then Christ is not risen, 1 Cor. 15. 12.

And again, If Christ be not risen, then is our Preaching vain, and we are in our Sins. Moreover, This Corruption, must put on Incorruption. and this Mortal must put on Immortality. All must arise whether they be good or bad, as the Apostle to the Hebrews saith, It is appointed for all Men once to die, and after Death cometh Judgment. For by the Sound of the Last Trumpet, the Dead shall arise, which is not a common Trumpet, but the Voice of Angels, which shall be heard far and near, nothing shall hinder it, from all the Corners of the Earth, shall this Trumpet be heard, for it is the Lord's Signal.

Reas. 1. And indeed it is requisite it should be so in regard of God's Justice, that his Promises and Threatnings might be made good to the Godly and the Wicked, which in this Life many times are not.

Reas. 2. The very Works in Nature do in a Manner shew this, as the Trees and Plants in the Earth in the Winter which seem to be dead, revive and live again in the Spring. And as a Phoenix when she is old, burns her self to Ashes, out of which she doth revive and live again.

And why then should any Man think it impossible for God to raise our Bodies out of the Dust, which though it seem impossible to Men, yet it is not impossible to God? for he that created all our Bodies of nothing, can make them again with something, even of their own Matter. And since Christ gave Life to himself when in the

the Grave, how much more now being alive, and in Heaven glorified, is he able to raise his Members from Death to Life. As the Apostle Paul saith, *If we believe that Jesus Christ died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him,* 1 Thess. 4. 14. And as he tells the Romans, *If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the Dead, dwell in you; he that raised up Christ from the Dead, shall also quicken your Mortal Bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you,* Rom. 8. 21. And to prove the Resurrection, these Witnesses are produc'd, First, The Angels, *Why seek ye the Living among the Dead, he is not here, he is risen,* Luke 24. 5. Secondly, The Saints that arose with him. Thirdly, A forc'd Testimony of the Soldiers, *Who come into the City, and told all things that were done.* Fourthly, The Disciples and Followers of Christ, and more than five hundred Brethren at once. Fifthly, Himself, who bid the Woman, *Go, tell my Brethren that I am risen,* 1 Cor. 15. And St. Peter in his first Epistle saith, Chap 1. Ver. 3. *Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant Mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively Hope, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead, to an Inheritance uncorrupt and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you, who are kept by the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation. Which St. Paul also confirms in all his Epistles, Christ is risen from the Dead, and is become the first Fruits of them that slept,* 1 Cor. 15. 20. Likewise Eph. 2. 6. *He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in Heaven with Jesus Christ. And in Acts 3.*

6. Unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus Christ, has sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from Iniquities.

Now the Benefits he obtain'd for us by his Resurrection, are.

First, Our Justification.

Secondly, Our Regeneration.

Thirdly, Our Resurrection to eternal Glory.

And the Fruits of Christ's Resurrection, are, *First, That by his Merit, he hath made full Satisfaction for our Sins. Secondly, The Application of his Benefits, that could not be conferr'd unless he had rose again. Thirdly, In the Gift of the Holy Ghost, by which Christ regenerates us. Fourthly, We have the same Spirit. Fifthly, By the Man Christ Jesus came the Resurrection from the Dead. And Lastly, The Fruits of Christ's Resurrection is the Consummation of Happiness, and the Glorification of his Church Militant, by which he hath made us Partakers of his Righteousness, Sanctification, and Glorification, purchased by his Merits only, These Things have I spoken unto you, saith Christ, that in me ye shall have Peace, in the World ye shall have Tribulation: Be of good cheer, I have overcome the World. John 16. 53. And St. Paul tells us, To this end, Christ died and rose again, and revived, that he might be both Lord of the Living and the Dead. Which Texts plainly prove the Article of our Faith, To believe the Resurrection of the Dead.*

The Hour shall come, saith our Saviour, in which all that are in the Grave, shall hear the Voice of the Son of God, and come forth. Which is compar'd

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to the Sound of a Trumpet, the loudest and shrillest of all Instruments, *Thess 1. 10* For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Arch-Angel, and with the Trump of God, and the Dead in Christ shall arise. Which Noise shall be heard over the whole World; nay, though Men have been many thousand Years rotten in the Grave, yet they shall hear it, and come forth to Judgement. All shall be compell'd to appear, even the Devils and damned Spirits shall be compell'd to appear, when every secret thing shall be reveal'd, and all the King's of the Earth, as well as the meanest Beggar, shall come to Judgement; for altho' Christ was a *Lamb* at his Passion, yet many will find him a *Lion* at his Resurrection

It were to be wish'd that Men would be wise and consider this, that they may in this their Day, hear the mild and gentle Voice of Christ in his Word, and by his Ministers calling them to Repentance, and forsake their Sins, before they hear his terrible Voice calling them to Judgement.

Therefore in all Afflictions and Miseries, and especially in Diseases and Death, we must strengthen our selves in the Hopes of the Resurrection, remembering that of the Apostle, *Phil. 3. 20, 21*. Our Conversation is in Heaven, from whence also we look for a Saviour, who shall change our vile Bodies, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious Body, according to the working, wherein he is ab'e even to subdue all things unto himself. And that we may be assur'd of this, St. Paul saith in

1 Cor.

1 Cor. 15. 20, 21. But now is Christ risen from the Dead, and become the First Fruits of them that slept; for since by Man came Death, by Man came also the Resurrection from the Dead.

As for the Day of the Resurrection, God hath hitherto shut it up in his Counsels; but that it will certainly come, has been fully prov'd, as well as the Manner of it. And that those who are dead, shall be taken up to meet the Lord, if their Sins press them not down to Destruction.

This Hope of the Resurrection, hath ever been the greatest Consolation to the Godly in their Afflictions: Whence Tertullian saith, that the Confidence in a Christian is in the Resurrection from the Dead. An Example of which, is in Job, who in the midst of his Afflictions said, I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand in the latter Days upon the Earth, and though after the Skin, Worms destroy my Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God. And Isaiah saith, Chap. 26. 19. The dead Men shall live, together with my dead Boay shall they arise: Awake and sing ye that dwell in the Dust, for thy Dew is as the Dew of Herbs, and the Earth shall cast out the Dead: At that time the People shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the Book. And Ezekiel is very plain, when he saith, Thus saith the Lord, Behold, O my People, I will open the Graves, and cause you to come out of the Graves, and bring you into the Land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your Graves, O my People; and brought you up out of your Graves,

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and shall put my Spirit into you, and you shall live, Ezek. 37. 12.

Use 1. Let us die what Death soever, and be scatter'd to the four Winds under Heaven, yet our Dust shall be gather'd together by the mighty Power of God, that the Soul may again enter into the Body, and both come to Judgment; therefore whilst we live, let us be mindful of our latter End, and then Death shall have no Power to do us any hurt; for if we every Hour think of Death, it will make us so live, that we may do well, and hope for a glorious Resurrection: As the Tree falls, so it lies; as Death leaves us, so will Judgment find us. But in doing wickedly, Death is so far from ending our Misery, that it is the beginning of it, therefore let us take care how we wish for Death, e'er we are prepared for it, for if we die in our Sins, it had been better for us never to have been born. And every Creature else is in a better State than us, because they cease to be, and their Pains are at an End; but it is not so with Man, for he has yet an Account to reckon for at the Day of Judgment.

Use 2. Seeing that all Men must rise to Judgment, this is a wonderful Comfort to God's poor Children, because then they shall receive their Recompence of Reward, for all the Labours, Sorrows, Miseries, Scorns, and Reproaches, they have undergone in this World; and the greater their Afflictions have been here, the greater shall their Happiness be hereafter.

Use 3

Use 3. This ought to be of exceeding Comfort to good Men, because Death shall not have Power to keep their Bodies in the Grave, but they shall rise in Glory, as Christ their Captain hath already done, which should make us cautious to keep our Bodies undefiled, because they are the living Temples of the Holy Ghost. Wouldst thou have thy Body glorified! then glorify God in thy Body. Can any Man think that his Soul shall be saved, and his Body glorified, if he Use the Members thereof to Sin and Uncleaness.

Use 4. Seeing that the Word of God assures us, that whatsoever Death we die, we shall rise again, and God's Children only shall rise to Life and Glory. This should teach us not to be sorry for those that die in the Lord, for they rest from their Labour, and shall rise again to Eternal Happiness.

And they were judged everyone according to his Works.

This is often repeated by the Holy Ghost, because we are hardly brought to believe this Point; for were Men sensible of this, certainly they would not live as they do in all manner of Wickedness.

How necessary is it then, that all who are blinded with Ignorance, and deluded with the Suggestions of the Devil, and their own wicked Imaginations, to pray to God for the Assistance of his Holy Spirit in all their Ways, that they may see their Mistake, and acknowledge with the true Penitent, the Judgment and Wrath of

God due unto them, and to endeavour to die to Sin, before they die to Nature, and strive to bury it, before it bury us, for Sin only brings Shame in this World, and Perdition in the Life to come. By which we shall not only enjoy a quiet Conscience in this Life, but end our Days with full Assurance of a joyful Resurrection in the Life to come, as the Consummation of all Happiness.



The Last Great Assize.

The Fourth and Last Sermon, concerning Death and Hell, and the Joys of Heaven.

Rev. 20. 14, 15.

14. *And Death and Hell were cast into the Lake of Fire, this is the second Death.*
 15. *And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life, was cast into the Lake of Fire.*



IN handling this weighty Point of Religion, the second Coming of Christ to Judgment, I told you who the Judge is, and how he shall come with great Power and Majesty, attended with an innumerable Company of Angels, and all the Host of Heaven, and

and also the Evidence and Records by which all must be tried, even the Books of Conscience, of Life, and the Word of God. It now remains, that we come to the Execution of that Judgment upon all the ungodly, who in this Life have turn'd their Backs upon good Admonition from God's Ministers; which is a very terrible thing, when Jesus Christ, the second Person in the Trinity, shall say unto them, *Depart from me ye Cursed into Hell Fire, there to remain for ever with the Devil and his Angels, &c* when immediately the Execution of the Sentence shall follow, *Death and Hell were cast into the Lake of Fire, that is the Second Death,*

Before I proceed any further, it will not be amiss to explain the Meaning of this, because some have made an Objection that Death is no Creature, nor hath any Sense of Feeling, and consequently not subject to Pain or Torments: And as for Hell, how can it be cast into it self, when it is there already? Which must be meant by the Lake of Fire. Is Hell a Water, or Fire? And then how can they die, who are doom'd to live Eternally in Torments, and wish to die, but cannot.

To which I answer, By Death and Hell in this Place, is not meant Death it self, nor Hell it self, but the Persons who have made themselves Heirs of Death and Hell, by their wicked Courses and reprobate Living in this World, who shall be cast into Hell Fire, and there abide for evermore; so that these are spoken Metaphorically, referring to those that die in their Sins; namely, all Reprobates, all stiff necked

Pharoahs, all bloody Cains, all treacherous Judas's, all these shall be cast into the Lake of Fire.

This shews the Misery of those that die in their Sins.

Use 1. Let all Sinners then that live and delight in Sins take heed; for as the Prophet saith, *Who can dwell with everlasting Burnings?* It were to be wish'd that all wilful Sinners would think in time of this horrible Misery that hangs over their Heads. What a strange kind of Speech is this? When God called such Reprobates, even Death and Hell it self, where the Worm of Conscience shall never die, which will be always gnawing and tormenting them, continually bringing into Remembrance the Happiness they have lost, for a few empty Pleasures. Oh! would to God, that the Drunkard, the Swearer, and Adulterer, the Profaner of the Lord's Day, would lay this to Heart, before the Vials of God's Wrath will be poured upon them.

Wicked Men now do, as the People did in *Isaiah's* time, *Isa. 28. 21.* make a League with Death and the Grave, as the rich Man in the Gospel, who said to his Soul, *Soul take thine Ease, for thou hast Goods and Riches laid up for many Years:* But the Lord tells them he will break the League, and that notwithstanding all their Boasting and Security, in the End Death shall knock at their Doors, and then they shall pay dear for their long Lease, even the Loss of Soul and Body for ever.

And is not this the daily Practice of most Men and Women now a days, do not many
Men

Men live in Swearing, Lying, Drunkenness, &c. as if they thought they should never die. But alas, poor Souls, let them know, that Death and Hell will seize upon them at last, and they must be cast into the Lake of Fire.

Use 2. In this you may see what a cursed and wretched thing Sin is in the Sight of God, which makes Men become Firebrands of Hell.

And Death and Hell were cast into the Lake of Fire.

Now as to this Fire, it cannot reasonably be taken for a material Fire, though that is very dreadful, but for something far exceeding it, because it never shall go out, nor ever consume what is doom'd to abide in it, though it torments with unspeakable Torments, then let us consider it, as the Holy Ghost in the Text means it, the *Second Death*, not of the Body only, but of *Eternal Death and Damnation both of Body and Soul for evermore*. By which we may plainly see, there is a double Death, first of the Body, and then at the Coming of the Lord to Judgment of the Soul and Body.

The first Death is the Separation of the Soul from the Body, and that is common to all, only in this it differs, *There is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*, Rom. 8. 1. But those that die in their Sins, shall be punished with everlasting Destruction, being sever'd from the Blessed Presence of the Lord for ever, and from the Glory of his Power, 2 Thess. 1. 9. which is a very terrible Death, to be depriv'd of the Presence of God, wherein the Happiness and Joy of

God's Children shall stand in the beholding of God, and enjoying his Presence for evermore, Matt. 5. 8. and to be compelled to have the Company of infernal Fiends always upbraiding and tormenting those that are so unhappy and miserable as to fall into this *Lake of Fire*, that cannot be quenched.

Secondly, Men and Women shall not only be severed in Body and Soul, from the Blessed and Glorious Presence of God for ever, at whose right Hand is Pleasure for evermore, but shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, and have their Abode with the Devil, and all the damned Spirits in Hell, where there is nothing but weeping and gnashing of Teeth as our Saviour himself hath expressed it, *Depart from me ye Cursed into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels*, Mat. 25. 14. Which Words include all the Misery that can befall a Sinner, to be out of the sweet and comfortable Presence of Christ Jesus, and his Holy Angels, Saints, and all the Blessed in Heaven, to be Companions with Devils in the terrible *Lake of Fire and Brimstone*.

Thirdly, The Misery is the greater, because it is Eternal Punishment; for St. John saith, *The Smoak of their Torments shall ascend evermore, and they shall have no rest Day nor Night*. Rev. 14. 11. which is an unexpressible Punishment: for the Damned shall not only lose God's glorious Presence, in which is fulness of Joy for evermore, but be perpetually tormented in unextinguishable Flames. *The Wrath and Vengeance of God shall seize on them, and feed on them, as Fire doth on Pitch and Brimstone, where they shall*

shall be ever burning, and yet never be consumed, this is a Torment that cannot be expressed said *Isaiah 66. 24.* That their *Worm shall not die, and their Fire shall not be quenched.* Which is a very miserable Condition in three Respects.

First, In Regard of the Degrees of it.

Secondly, In regard of the Place.

Thirdly, In Regard of the Perpetuity of it.

The first appears in the Loss of our Blessed Communion with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, In whose Presence is Life, and at whose right Hand is Pleasure for evermore. But the wicked shall be punished at that Day with Everlasting Destruction from the Presence of the Lord, *2 Thess 1. 9.* which is a Punishment that we may guess to be intolerable enough, to burn and not to consume, to live and to have no End, which will make them to cry out to the Rocks and Mountains to fall upon them to cover them, when there shall be Tribulation, Anguish, and Wrath upon every Man that doth evil, *Rom. 13. 4.*

Secondly, In Regard of the Place, which is Hell, which in the Scripture is called, The bottomless Gulph, utter Darknes, the fearful Topher, the Dungeon of Despair, the Burning Lake, the hollow Cave, the Choice of all Confusion, the Grave of Perdition, whose Furnace is always burning, whose Fire is made by God's Wrath, and his Power upholds it, and it is blown with the Bellows of his Indignation, it is unquenchable, even prepared for the Devil and his Angels.

Thirdly, In Regard of the Perpetuity of this Punishment, it shall never have an End, it shall be without Hope of Intercession; for

St. John saith, Rom. 14. 11. *The Smoak of their Torment shall ascend for evermore, and they shall have no rest Day nor Night.*

O! that Men would consider these things in time, and not cast away themselves to gain Riches, Pleasure, or Honour, whilst they neglect the most weighty things necessary to Salvation, which is timely Repentance, and living up to those Rules that are appointed to work out our Salvation, whilst it is yet to Day, least the Night of Death should come upon us unawares, and no Man can work.

There is no Man living but hopes to escape this Death, this flaming Fire, and by that hope to defer their Repentance till old Age come upon them, and they are not capable of doing any thing else: But this oftentimes deceives them, for the Holy Ghost by the Mouth of St. John saith, *The Fearful, and Unbelievers, and Abominable, and Murderers, and Whoremongers, and Sorcerers, and Liars, &c. shall have their Part in the Lake that burneth with Fire and Brimstone, which is the Second Death, Rev. 21. 8.* And after this, there is no Repentance, no Recovery, there will be a great Gulph, as Abraham told Dives, between the Godly and Ungodly; for the Godly shall see and behold the Ungodly in Hell, as Lazarus did Dives in Hell Torments.

So that you see the Spirit of God saith, and he cannot lie, *That all wicked and ungodly Sinners shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, which many Men and Women will not believe, although it is so often mention'd in the Scripture, who will say, Tush, there is nothing in it, God is merciful,*
which

which in plain Words, is to give God the Lie, who is the Fountain of all Truth: And yet tell the Drunkard and Prophaner of the Lord's Day, that they must give an Account of those things, and without speedy Repentance, they will be damn'd for them, they will presently say, they hope to be sav'd as well as the best, notwithstanding the Holy Ghost hath so often said, That all Unbelievers, and Thieves, and Murderers, &c. shall be cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, which is the Second Death.

But the Spirit of God doth not only shew those whose Heart tremble for fear of those things, and whose Soul doth melt for fear of this Second Death, how to escape this terrible Lake of Fire, which is eternal Damnation and Torment both of Body and Soul, but to obtain Salvation and Joy in the Presence of God for evermore, *Blessed and Happy is he that hath his Part in the first Resurrection, for on such the Second Death shall have no Power: But they shall be the Priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand Years, that is, for evermore, Ver. 6.*

The Holy Ghost saith they, and none but they, that have their Parts in the first Resurrection, shall escape the Second Death, and Eternal Damnation in the Lake of Hell Fire. Therefore it is manifest the Children of God have a double Resurrection and one Death, but all wicked and ungodly Sinners have one Resurrection, and a double Death, for they that are to escape Eternal Damnation, are they that have their Part in the first Resurrection, and that is by rising out of the Grave of Sin, to the Newness

ness of Life, which is otherwise called dying to Sin, and living unto Christ. As *St. Paul* saith, *You hath he quickned, who are dead in Trespasses and Sin.* Ephes. 2. 1. *Therefore we are buried with Christ in Baptism into Death, that like as Christ was raised from the Dead by the Glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in Newness of Life,* Rom. 6. 4.

Now to know whether this may be aptly applied unto us, is to look into our own Souls, and there to examine our selves, whether we are risen from Sin in this Life, to a Newness and Holiness of Life, and whether we labour to mortify and keep under the Works of the Flesh, and walk in all Holy Duties of Obedience to God and Man. And if so, there is great Hopes we have attained to the first Resurrection; but then be sure to take heed to your Ways, that you fall not again into Sin, least it adds new Fuel to burn you with; Remember what is said, *There is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ, which walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit.*

Therefore let every Man and Woman labour to be sure of the first Resurrection, and then this second will be easy to them, and they shall enter from Judgment into Heaven, and remain there in Blifs for ever and ever, accompanied with *Cherubims, Seraphims, Arch-Angels, Angels, Saints*, and all the Holy Company of Blessed Spirits.

This is a very great Comfort to all the real Members of Christ's that forsake their Sins, and endeavour to conquer their unruly Lusts, and even to live a Godly Life, though they

are

are in Misery, Poverty, or want, and in the end die the first Death of the Body, yet they shall be freed from the Second Death which is Eternal. *The Gates of Hell shall not prevail against them ; for as St. Paul saith, The Elect shall have Eternal Life, but they that be Reprobates, shall be cast into the Lake of Fire ; for if ye live after the Flesh, ye shall also die, Rom. 13. 8.*

Therefore deceive not your selves, as too many do, who think if they come to Church every Lord's Day, and receive the Sacrament now and then, all is well ; but let me tell you, ye may come to Church all your Lives, and receive the Sacrament ever so often, yet unless you live a Godly Life and strive to become a new Creature, your Estate is in a very deplorable Condition, and your Portion is likely to be the Lake of Fire and Brimstone. Therefore let no Man deceive himself, to imagine because he now and then hears a Sermon, or receives the Sacrament, that he is out of all Danger, and sure of Heaven : But that will not do, no, not by a great deal ; for if a Man live in Sin, as Swearing, Drunkenness, Whoring, &c. he is in a miserable State, and may go to Hell, notwithstanding all his Pretensions to Religion.

Nor is this all, to die and go to Hell alone, for they shall be in the Sea of Miseries, and in an Ocean of Calamities, Fire continually flaming about them, and yet they not consumed, Rage and Madnes, and wrathful Indignation, shall be within them, having the Worm of Conscience (which never die-) continually tormenting them. And what is more, when they shall

shall look up, and behold the Angels and Saints rejoycing and triumphing in the Presence of the Lamb, and at that same time, they see nothing about them but Brimstone and hot burning Coals : They shall be always in the Flames- but never consumed, their Meat shall be griping Hunger, and their Drink Lakes of Fire and Brimstone, and their Pleasure, howling and roaring of foul deformed Fiends accompanied with Devils.

Thus Heaven they have lost, which cannot now be recover'd, and Hell they have receiv'd, whose Torments they must endure. What doleful Cries shall those miserable Wretches then screek out ? They shall howl and weep because they cannot be heard, which if they could, no Man will pity them ; which will make them curse their Birth-day, and the Paps which gave them suck, continually crying, Wo, Wo, that ever I was born, to neglect God's Commandments, and to break his Laws, running after my own Inventions, I cannot say but I have justly deserv'd this Punishment.

And therefore you see if you would live after you are dead, you must die to Sin, while you are alive, only those who die to Sin, shall live to Righteousness ; but he that lives in Sin, shall die for his Sins Eternally, and as he would not labour to have his Part in the first Resurrection, so he shall be sure to have his Portion in the Second Death ? To prevent which miserable Condition, let every Man and Woman labour to have their Part in the first Resurrection, so that the second Death may do us no harm, but they

they shall live in Joy and Happiness for ever in Heaven with the Almighty, and all the Arch-Angels, Angels, Saints, Martyrs, who shall be their Companions for ever and without end.

In this Kingdom there shall be Eternal Plenty, God will give them the *Water of Life*, out of the Rivers of his Pleasure, there shall be neither Hunger and Thirst, but all shall be supplied and satiated with every good thing. Here we see God but in Part, and that through a Glass, but there we shall behold him Face to Face. It will be a wonderful Glory to the Children of God to bear the Smilitude of Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile Bodies, to be like to his glorious Body, according to his mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself, Phil. 2. 24.

Therefore let every Man and Woman endeavour to seek the Kingdom of God, for if that be once found, there is no need of any further Happiness; but if it should be lost, though we should gain the whole World, it would prove but Madness and Folly. And as it is not possible for the Tongues of Men and Angels to express the Joys of Heaven, so it is impossible to express the Miseries of the Damn'd. In short, to gain the one, and avoid the other, is the main End for which Man receives Life and Being; and therefore it behoves all to endeavour to make their Calling and Election sure, so that they may be receiv'd into the Eternal Habitation of Bliss and Happiness.

1. *And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life, was cast into the Lake of Fire.*

The former Verse shews the Execution of God's Wrath upon all ungodly and wicked Sinners; and this the different Estate of the Children of God, and of the Wicked; for as there are but two Sorts of Men, *Good and Bad*, the Children of God, and the Children of the Devil, so there are but two Places, *Heaven and Hell*, Joy and Pain, and the Rewards shall be accordingly, either *Bless'd or Cursed*; for St. John saith, *The Elect shall have Eternal Life, but they that are Reprobates, shall be cast into the Lake of Fire.*

As the Lives of the Godly differ from the Ungodly in this World, so their Condition after this Life is far different; for as the one shall be eternally miserable, so the other shall be Blessed and happy for ever; nay, to such a Degree St. Paul saith, *As the Eye never saw it, nor ever enter'd into the Heart of Man, to conceive the hundredth Part of this Happiness*, 2. Cor. 2. 9.

First, The Blessed Estate of the will consists in this, that God shall be *all in all unto us*. If thou desire *Wealth*, God will be it to thee; if *Honour or Pleasure*, God will be all in all to thee.

Secondly, In the Kingdom of Heaven, there shall be no Manner of want; for all Defects of Body and Soul shall be supplied: And though we see God now but in Part, yet then we shall behold

behold him Face to Face, not in a Glass darkly but see him even as we are seen, and for evermore live in his Blessed Presence, and reign with him for ever.

Thirdly, All the Children of God shall be like unto Jesus Christ, as St. Paul saith, *He shall change our vile Bodies, and make them like to his glorious Body.*

Fourthly, In Heaven we shall reap endless Joy, and eternal Happiness, and shall delight in praising God for ever, so as we shall keep a perpetual Sabbath, and Joy in the Service of God for ever, where we shall have Joy without Sorrow, Day without Night, no Valley of Tears, but a Sion of Glory, and endless Comforts. When wretched will be the Condition of those, who say, it is in vain to serve the Lord, or as Pharaoh said, *Who is the Lord, that I should fear him.* Which Men then shall know it is not in vain to serve the Lord, for if we will not keep a good Conscience, and go to Heaven by good Example, we must go to Hell with the Wicked for Company; which should make us abound in Holy Duties, since God will Reward even the least Work of Faith.

If thou give but a Cup of cold Water in the Name of Christ, verily thou shalt not lose thy Reward, for though Works do not merit, yet they are rewardable. What mad Men then are we, if we never think of Heaven, till we have one Foot in the Grave, we cannot go to Heaven on Beds of Down; no, we must strive and take Pains to enter in, for the Gate is strait, and narrow is the Way.

It grieves a Man to think what will become of the Ungodly Sinners, whose Names are not written in the Book of Life. Alas ! poor wretched Souls, The Holy Ghost saith, *They shall be cast into the Lake of Fire.* And Christ's pronounces this terrible Judgment, *Depart from me, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels,* Mat. 25. 41. Ah miserable Wretches, it had been better for them, that they had never been born, or had been Toads or Serpents rather than Men ; for they shall not only be cast from the Presence of the Almighty, and his holy Angels, but shall be cast into the Lake of Fire for ever.

Now although I have already told you, What is meant by this Lake, and the Torments all wicked and ungodly Men and Women shall suffer therein, yet for your further Instruction, I shall set down these three material Points, with as much Brevity as they will admit of.

First, The Extremity of it.

Secondly, The Perpetuity of it.

And *Thirdly,* That from it there is no Redemption.

As for the Extremity of it, the Pains are intollerable, and beyond all Expression.

As to the Perpetuity of it, it is Endless for so long as God is God, so long shall the Damn'd be tormented in this Flame, and that is to all Eternity.

And, as from that there's no Redemption, certain it is that Christ having once died to save Man, will not die again ; without which God's Wrath cannot be appeas'd.

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These things well consider'd, one would think, should make the flinty Hearts of Sinners to melt and break to Pieces, for fear they should come into the Place of Torment, this *Lake of Fire*: Which the Spirit of God so often repeats in the Scriptures, because Men are so negligent of this weighty Matter, their own Salvation. Now, because it is called a *Lake of Fire*, it signifieth the Extremity of Torment, which the Scriptures gives several Names, to show the unspeakable Torments all wicked and impenitent Sinners shall suffer to all Eternity, for of all Torments none is so great as Fire: Beside, Their Worm shall never die. And Isaiah saith, Tophet is prepared for the King, he cannot escape, and it is deep and large, and the burning thereof is Fire and much Wood, and the Breath of the Lord as a River of Brimstone shall kindle it, Isa. 30. 33. By which you may in Part conceive the Extremity of this woful Lake of Hell Fire. But had I the Tongue of Men and Angels, I could never express it in full: For as the Joys of Heaven are unspeakable, so the Torments of Hell are *Idea* of it; and that is, God knows, but a small one, you must know that the Torments of Hell are universal, even in all the Parts of the Body, and Faculties of the Soul at the same time. The Pains in this Life are for the most part particular in some Part of the Body, but in this Fire the Sinner shall be tormented in all Parts at once. For the Truth of which, I shall give you an Example in the rich Glutton, who cried out, *Father Abraham, have Mercy on me, and*

and send Lazarus, that he may dip the Top of his Finger in Water, and cool my Tongue ; for I am tormented in this Flame, Luke 16. 24.

To prevent which, let us make that Use which our Saviour advises, if thy right Hand or Foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee, that is as much as to say, let us forsake our Darling beloved Sins, for it is better to go lame into Heaven, than whole into Hell.

Secondly, As the Pains of Hell are without any Ease, so they are without any End. As Abraham tells Dives, You are there, and cannot come thither, Luke 16. 26. It is a Lake of Fire and Brimstone that burneth for ever, Rev. 22. it can never be quenched : What Fools are they then, who to enjoy the Pleasure of Sin for a Season, will endure the Torments of Hell for ever.

Thirdly, They are remedyless, for the rich Man in Hell would have given the whole World, if he had it, only for one Minute's Ease, but it could not be had ; there is no Remedy in Hell, no Silver nor Gold, no Wit nor Policy will help, but he must abide by the Judgment, which makes the Devils and damn'd Spirits to tremble, and yet it cannot move stony hearted Sinners to be afraid ? which is very strange that Men should run headlong upon that Destruction, which they may in time prevent.

Our Blessed Saviour tells us, that the Soul of the poor Beggar is more worth than many thousand Worlds, What Benefit were it for a Man saith he, to win the whole World, and presently to lose both Body and Soul. No less comparable to this,

his, which is of all Losses, is to be sever'd from God, and be in Hell tormented for ever. Let us remember the Word, of St. Peter, 2 Pet. 3. 9. and so on, The Heavens and the Earth which are now, by the same Word are kept in store, and reserv'd unto Fire against the Day of Judgment, and Perdition of Ungodly Men. The Lord is not slack but patient : But the Day of the Lord will come as a Thief in the Night, in which the Heavens shall pass away with a great Noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat, the Earth also, and the Works that are therein shall be burnt up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of Persons ought ye to be in holy Conversation and Godliness, looking for, and hastning unto the Coming of the Day of God, wherein the Heavens being on Fire, shall be dissolv'd ? But we look for new Heavens and a new Earth, according to his Promise wherein dwelleth Righteousness. Wherefore, Beloved, seeing you look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in Peace, without Spot, and Blameless, and account that the Long suffering of the Lord is Salvation. Now the End of all things is at hand, be ye therefore sober and watching in Prayer. And St. Luke bids you Chap. 21. Verse 34. Take heed to your selves, least at any time your Hearts be overcharged with Surfeiting and Drunkenness, and Cares of this Life ; and so that Day come upon you unawares. For as a Snare shall it come on all them, that dwell upon the Face of the whole Earth : Watch ye therefore and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all those things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man : for it is

is he that will say, *Arise ye Dead and come to Judgment.*

And now having done with all the Text, which is the *Lake that burneth with Fire and Brimstone for ever.* I will not leave you in Horror and Dread, but comfort you with the Joysof Heaven, and Happiness of the blessed that shall dwell therein for evermore. As St. Paul relates in 1 Cor. 2. 9. *The things which Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it enter'd into the Heart of Man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* No Man can express the Comforts and Enjoyments of Heaven, any more than he can imagine the miserable Pains and Agonies of the Damn'd.

All Men must own that the Kingdom of Heaven is a glorious Place, because it is the Residence of the Great God, which made holy David cry out, *O how miserable are thy Tabernacles, Thou Lord of Hosts ?* Wherein St. Paul being taken up, he heard unspeakable Words, which it is not lawful for any Man to utter. 2 Cor. 12. 4. All we know or can say of it, is only this, it is a spiritual Kingdom, and its Glory is past all Imagination, which St. John describes to be adorn'd with all the glorious things that are desirable on Earth. The Heavens, where the Moon is more glorious than our Sun, and the Sun as Glorious as he that made it ; for 'tis he himself the Son of God, the Sun of Glory. A New Earth, where all their Waters are Milk, and all their Milk-Honey, where all their Grass is Corn, and all their Corn Manna ; where all their Glebe is Gold, and all their Gold of innumerable

able Carats ; where all their Minutes are Ages, and all their Ages Eternity, where every Minute is every Minute in the highest Exaltation ; as good as it can be, and yet super exalted, and infinitely multiplied by every Minute's Addition, every Minute infinitely better than ever it was before : Of these New Heavens and this New Earth, we can only say, that we can say nothing : For the Eye of Man hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nor Heart conceived, the State of this Place. We limit and determine our Consideration with that Horizon, with which the Holy Ghost hath limited us, that it is that New Heavens, and New Earth wherein dwelleth Righteousness.

To those who are affected with Riches, the Holy Ghost saith, Rev. II. 18. That that New City shall be all of Gold, and in the Foundations all manner of precious Stones. To those that are affected with Beauty, he promises an everlasting Association, with that beautiful Couple, that fair Pair, which spend their time in Contemplation, Behold, thou art fair my Beloved, and she replies, Behold, thou art fair too ; signifying the mutual Compliance between Christ and his Church, Cant. I. 13, 16. To those which delight in Musick, he promises continual Singing, and every Minute a New Song. To those whose Thoughts are exercis'd upon Honour and Titles, Civil or Ecclesiastical, he promises Priesthood ; and if that be not Honour enough, a Royal Priesthood. And to those who look after Military Honour, Triumph after their Victory in the Church Militant. In short, as David saith, We shall be satisfied with the Abundance

of

of God's House, and he shall give us Waters of his Pleasure, as out of a River. Even Blessings shall be heaped upon his Saints, and though they may differ in Glory, as one Star differeth from another, yet all shall shine very Glorious.

You see then what a Blessed Life is, it is the Fruition of God himself, in Heaven, where we behold God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, not darkly as in a Glass, but Face to Face, free from all Miseries, Diseases, Labour, and Grief with ineffable Comfort. This Word is but a Vale of Tears, and this Life is full of Misery, but God in the World to come will wipe them all away. *He will swallow up Death in Victory; and the Lord God will wipe away Tears from off all, Faces and the Rebuke of his People, shall he take away from off the Face of the Earth: For the Lord has spoken it.* Why may not we then cry out with the Prophet David, *Lord what is Man that thou takest knowledge of him, or the Son of Man that so regardest him.*

As the Prophets of old did stir up People's Minds by Expectation of Temporal Blessing and thereby give them Hopes of greater Blessings to come, so let us grow up into Admiration of those Heavenly and inexpressible Excellencies, which are altogether past our Apprehension, and Understanding; for as Spiritual Blessings do far exceed Corporal Blessings, so Heavenly Joys do far surpass all earthly Glory.

If Abraham left his Country and his Father's House, for a Land he knew not; and Moses refus'd to be call'd the Son of Pharaoh's Daughter, despising all the Glories of the Court of Egypt,

to accompany the Children of *Israel* through a barren and desert Wilderness to the earthly *Canaan* ; how much more should we leave all to Journey toward this Heavenly Country, whose Pleasentness to hear of it is so ravishing to our Ears, although it is but a dim and faint Representation of what is really is in its own Excellency. To do which, let us make hast to reconcile our selves with God, by a true and sincere Repentance, running into the Arms of Christ, who is continually holding them out to receive us into all those Joys, which he has prepared for all them that love and fear him in the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, the City of God, where *St. John* saith, *He saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, come down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a Bride Trimmed for her Husband* : Of which we may say with *David*, *Psal. 84. 1, 2. How amiable are thy Tabernacles O Lord of Hosts ! My Soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord, my Heart and my Flesh cryeth out for the living God. Blessed are they that dwell in thy House, they will be still praising thee ; for a Day in thy Court is better than a thousand. I had better be a Door keeper in the House of my God, then to dwell in the Tents of the Wicked.*

Secondly, This Kindom of Heaven is a Paradise, it is a Kingdom of Grace, it is the Kingdom of Glory, a Celestial Kingdom, not made with Hands, but an Immortal Kingdom, for it is establish'd by Grace : Whose King never dies and at whose right Hand are Pleasures for evermore, which made *David* say, I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the Goodness of

the Lord in the Land of the Living, which since the beginning of the World, Men have not heard, neither hath the Eye seen, O God, besides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waited for him, Psal. 36. 7. 8. *How excellent is thy loving Kindness, O Lord ! Therefore the Children of Men put their Trust under the Shadow of thy Wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy House, and thou shalt make them drink of the Rivers of thy Pleasure : For with thee is the Fountain of Life, and in thy Light shall we see Light.* This City then is the Holy of Holies, in respect of the glorious Company that is in it, for there are none but Saints and Angels, and it is most Holy, because it is the Habitation of the Lord of Hosts, whose Glory exceeds all our Imaginations.

If Peter, who saw our Saviour's Transfiguration in the Mount, which was but an Image of the Glory that was to be, said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here, rejected all worldly Pleasures in respect of that. What shall we say, when we have the Fruition of the same, Blessing, and Glory, and Honour, and Power, and Might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

By these Words you see, how glorious the City of God is ; the Walls are of Jasper, and the Foundations of Precious Stones, the Gates of Pearls, and the Pavements of pure Gold ; and so, how much more comfortable are those things within the City ? According to Rev. 2. 17. *To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the hidden Manna, and will give him a white Stone, and in*

the Stone a new Name written, which no Man knoweth, save he that receiveth it.

The greatest Joys on Earth, are of least Account in Heaven, for all shall be crown'd, 2 Tim. 4. 8. Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge, shall give me at that Day; and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearance. Whose Kingdom is past our Imagination, and contains in it all that can be wish'd or desired; for which Reason Abraham did forsake his own Native Country, his Friends, and his Father's House, to go into a Land he knew not where. And Moses forsook Egypt, and refus'd to be called the Son of Pharaoh's Daughter. And Holy Men and Women in the Gospel left their Riches and all that they had, and laid them down at the Apostles Feet, wandering up and down in Wilderesses and in Mountains, and hiding themselves in Dens and Caves of the Earth: But they had a Respect unto the Recompence of Reward, the Kingdom of God, where they desired to be. Therefore if we desire to come to this Place of Happiness, come with Jesus Christ in our Hearts by Faith and plead his Merits, Death, and Passion, and so enter into his Joy.

The Heavenly Joys of his Soul.

The Joys that belong to the Heavenly Jerusalem, principally affect the Soul, which is the principal Part of Man, and then the Body, for that, at the Resurrection, being re-united to the Soul, shall with it partake of this Happiness.

ness, that the whole Man may receive his full Perfection, as he was at first created. And whereas the only Delight of a Godly Man, is to serve and praise God, especially in the Church and in the Congregation, they meet together to worship and adore his Holy Name: But in this Celestial *Jerusalem*, there will be no need of a Church or Temple, for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb are the Temple of it. And therefore why should Men and Women be so backward to enter into this Joy, where we shall have in that Celestial Mansion, no Joy by Weight or Measure, but in the overflowing abundance even to Excess; which to a pious and godly Soul, is as Wings to carry it through all the Miseries it meets with in this Vale of Tears, whilst it remains here in the Body, as in Prison, labouring to be releas'd, that it may fly to its Heavenly Home. And where, as *St. Ambrose* saith, Rivers of Joy and Comfort, so much, as we shall be overcome with Joy, which will be as it were Wings to the Soul, to fly through this Valley of Adversities; for as long as the Soul is in the Body, it is confin'd, as a Bird in a Cage, and cannot get out.

Thus, you see, in the Presence of God shall be all Happiness, and at his right Hand are Pleasure for evermore. And as it is said, *The four and twenty Elders fell down and worshipp'd him that sat on the Throne, and cast their Crowns before him, so shall all the Blessed of Heaven do, singing Praises and Hallelujahs; for we find, Rev. 7. 4. That the hundred forty and four thousand, which had the Name of God in their foreheads, do sing a*

new Song before the Throne, and no Man could learn that Song, but the hundred forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the Earth, and they were clothed in long white Garments, having Palms in their Hand. Ver. 9. Which cry'd with a loud Voice, saying, Salvation be ascribed to him that sitteth upon the Seat of our God; and all the Angels stood in the Compass of the Seat, who fell before the Seat on their Faces, saying, Amen, Blessing, and Glory, Wisdom, Thanks, Honour, Power, and Might, be unto our God for evermore.

And as these did, so so shall all those that come before God's Presence with Souls full of Joy and Thankfulness, who being filled with abundance of all Spiritual Comfort, shall not cease to sing *Hallelujah* and Praises to God, who is the Author and Giver of all Happiness: To whom Grief and Sorrow will be Strangers, and the Voice of Mourning shall be no more heard, but every Tongue, and every Place shall sound with Praises and Thanksgivings to the Son of God, the Son of Righteousness, for his Goodness in taking our Nature upon him, and his Mercies in suffering an ignominious Death to save all that believe in him.

This made holy David long to come into his Presence, when he cry'd out, *When shall I come and appear before the Presence of God?* For certainly it is an unspeakable Happiness to be in his Presence, at whose right Hand are Pleasures for evermore.

Now shall the Minds and Hearts of those that are thus Blessed, be filled with abundance of Spiritual Comfort, for we see now but in

Part, but then shall we see in Fulness of Glory, when all Terror and Darknes of Ignorance shall be taken away, and we shall desire to see God; as holy David saith, *My Soul thirsteth after thee, like as the Hart desireth the Water Brooks, so longeth my Soul after thee, O God, yea, even for the Living God: When shall I come to appear before the Presence of God?* Then shall our Desire be fully satisfied, and that which was denied the Prophet Moses, to see the Glory of God in this Life, shall then be granted to every one that shall there be placed. This is what all good Christians ought to long for, and earnestly desire, since it is the Consummation of all they can breath and pant after, as an Ease of all Misery.

Then Grief of Mind and Sorrow of Heart shall be utterly removed, no Weeping, no Mourning, no Lamentation, to be heard throughout the Holy Mountain. Behold, saith the Prophet in the Person of God, *My Servant shall sing for Joy of Heart, I will joy in my People, and the Voice of Weeping shall be no more heard, nor the Voice of crying, Isa. 65. 14. For God shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes, and there shall be no more Sorrow, neither shall there be any more Pain; for the former things are pass away, Rev. 21. 4.* That is, those which we suffered in this Lite, shall not molest us any more Sorrow, but Joy and Gladness remain for ever. Afflictions shall never be felt, nor Complaint heard, no Cause of Grief, but Happiness which shall abundantly over recompence all the Sufferings of the Righteous in

In this Life. In God we shall find all Knowledge, Wisdom, Beauty, Riches, Nobility, Goodness, Delight, and every thing that deserveth our Love and Admiration, or worketh Pleasure and Content. All the Power of the Mind shall be filled with the Light, Presence, and Fruition of God, and all the Senses of the Body shall be satisfied. God will be all things unto us, causing our Souls to be enlighten'd, and shine with Righteousness, Holiness, and all Spiritual Graces, which should raise up our Souls to a cheerful undergoing all Miseries whatsoever which may happen in this Life, and comfort all the Children of God under their Afflictions, and make them more cheerfully to bear the Troubles and want of Life, for God is a Content to our Will, and a Continuation of Eternity to our Memory. In him we shall enjoy all the Varieties of things that are delightful here, and all the Joys that content us now, when our Souls shall be restored to the Image of God, in a full Measure, as it was first created, and be thoroughly beautified and adorned with Spiritual Graces.

The Heavenly Joys of the Body.

As for the Heavenly Joys of the Body, the Commodities and Priviledges of it, contributing to make them full, as they are thus united to the Soul are many; for it shall have no need of any thing to preserve it, that in its corruptible State is requisite to its Subsistence, nor sustain any of those Infirmities that it is in this World incident to, neither shall any Night

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shadow

shadow it; for as it is recorded in the Verse before the Text, That *the City had no need of the Sun or of the Moon, to shine in it*, which is as much as to say, *there shall be no Earthly Wants*. Notwithstanding the Heat of the Sun is a great Blessing to this World, and most comfortable to Man and Beast, because it bringeth forth the Fruits of the Earth for Man's Food, and without which all things seem to be sad and lowering, but then shall we need not this Blessing; for the Presence of God shall comfort us, and the Glory of God shall supply the Want of the Sun and Moon; which will always illuminate it, and give it a perpetual Day, far more Bright and Glorious than the Sun is capable of doing whilst it remains below. Its Food shall be Spiritual Nourishment, and its Cloathing the White Robes of Christ's Righteousness, all things shall then be ministred unto us abundantly, that we shall not so much as think of any Want, whether it be Food or Clothing, or any Comforts of this Life whatsoever: For as the Prophet *Isaiab* saith, 49. 10. *They shall neither hunger nor thirst, neither shall the Heat or Sun smite them, for he that bath Mercy on them shall lead them, even by the Springs of Water shall he guide them*. Where the Body shall be fearless from hurt and danger, and from the Enemy; no secret Contrivances nor Circumventions shall molest its quiet, but it shall rest always at Ease in the pleasant Vales of Heaven; Death shall then be swallowed up in Victory, and have no more Power over us.

In this World the Body hath need of Rest, but in Heaven there shall be no need of Rest. Here are Houses shut for fear of Thieves, but there they shall be always open, because there shall be no fear of publick or private Enemies, nor fear of future Hurts or Damages. They that are oppressed in this World, had need of Friends to help and comfort them, which are very rare to be met with ; but their Violence shall no more be heard of, nor Oppression be so much as thought of, but every one's Cause shall be fairly and impartially heard, and every Wrong shall be righted. And as no Grief of Mind, so no Dis ease of Body shall molest us, neither shall there be any Use of Physick ; all Imperfections shall be turned into Perfections, and all Deformities into Beauty. Death, which is the mighty Conqueror of Mankind, shall then be trdden under Foo ; for Death shall be swallowed up in Victory, so that with Comfort we may then say, *O Death, where is thy Sting ? O Grave, where is thy Victory ?* There we may freely eat of the *Tree of Life*, without any Danger of forfeiting its Happiness, which our first Parents could not taste of, nor so much as touch ; for though they tasted of the *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil*, yet they were soon cast out of Paradise for it, lest they should put forth their Hands, and take the *Tree of Life* also, and eat and live for ever, *Gen. 3. 22.* In this *New Jerusalem* we shall enjoy Mirth without Sadness, Health without Sickness, Strength without Weakness, Life without Labour, Light without Darkness, and Happiness without end.

It shall always flourish in Youth and Beauty that never fade or decay. There it shall have Joy without ceasing, Happiness without Change; and in short whatever can contribute to a perfect Felicity. For it shall be freed from all Corruption, Mortality, or other Casualty; and all it has to do, is to praise and magnify the living God, who doth all this and abundance more for us, and who shall set his Seal upon us, and imprint the Name upon our Foreheads, as a Mark that we are his beloved Children, worthy to hear the ravishing Melody and Harmony of the Angels antheming the Throne of God, whilst we our selves joyn in the Holy Choir, singing continually Praises and Hallelujahs to him that liveth for ever and ever.

Now Man grieves for the Loss of his Body, and Delights of the World, which Faith alone doth ease, that promises an undoubted Restitution of the Body, to a better Condition, and assures him of everlasting Life, in which shall be everlasting Blessedness. Then as I formerly said, shall this Body be free from all Corruption, and Men shall then be like Angels, free from Wand and Poverty. They shall Hunger no more, nor thirst, neither shall the Sun scorch them; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the Throne shall feed them, and lead them unto the living Fountain of Water, and God shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes, Rev. 21. 4. I saw no Temple therein that was made with Hanas, saith St. John, for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the Temple of it, Rev. 21. 22. 23. And the City had no need of the Sun, neither

neither of the Moon to shine in it, for the Glory of God did enlighten it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof, whom his Servants shall serve, they shall see his Face, and his Name shall be in their Foreheads. Who shall continually hear such Heavenly Musick which is sung by the Choir of Angels in the Church Triumphant that it would ravish any Soul on Earth to hear; which St. Basil saith, To hear is more sweet than Devotion, and far sweeter than all things in this World can be.

Let us therefore be converted, and turn unto the Lord with all our Hearts betimes, that when we die, we may with holy David, lift up our Voices and say, Oh! how great is thy Goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee, before the Sons of Men. Even as the Heart panteth after the Water Brooks, so panteth my Soul after Thee, O God. My Soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; O when shall I come and appear before God, Psal. 42. 1. Certainly there is nothing so bitter and sharp in this Life, but the Contemplation of the Joys of Heaven will sweeten and allay; for in Heaven there is neither Death nor Mourning, Weariness nor Weakness, Famine nor Thirst, but Content and Happiness in the highest Degree, as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it entered into the Heart of Man, the Things which God has prepared for them that love and fear him. Therefore let no Man that hath liv'd uprightly, be stagger'd at any Tribulations and Misfortunes, or fear to die, or doubt of the Joys of Heaven;
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for as we are all born, so we must all die, and then the Joys of Heaven will recompence us for all our Sufferings in this World, were they ten thousand times more than any they have been. And can any Man if he rightly considers, think to get that by Favour, which God himself only has by Nature, *Immortality*! No, we must change this Life, and this Mortality must put on Immortality; for no Man or Woman can expect to gain so great an Happiness by being negligent and putting off his Repentance from Day to Day, even to old Age, or a Death-bed Repentance, which is very uncertain, whether it will be acceptable or not in the last Hour; for God loves the early Penitent, often putting young Persons in mind, *To remember their Creator in the Days of their Youth.*

Let me advise you then to enter early into the Church Militant, and put on the whole Armour of God, to resist the Temptations of Satan, that in the end you may receive the Crown, for the Godly are as Warriors, in Skirmishes daily in this Life; but in that to come, they shall be crown'd Conquerors. Now they suffer trouble, though their Life be lead with Christ in God; but when Christ shall appear, they shall also appear with him in Glory; according to that which was pronounced by a Voice from Heaven, *Rev. 14. 13. Write, Blessed are the Dead which die in the Lord, even so saith the Spirit, for they rest from their Labours, and their Works follow them.*

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Consider then, What Joy will the Soul receive in that Day, when it is presented in the Presence of so great a Multitude before the Throne of the Holy and ever Blessed Trinity, where shall be exposed to the View of all the Host of Heaven, all thy vertuous Deeds and Innocency of Life? and for thy farther Comfort, as the Wicked shall be vexed with horrible fear, when they shall thus see the Righteous stand in great Boldness, *so shall the Righteous go forth, and look upon the Carcasses of the Men that have transgressed God's Will and Holy Law, Isa. 66. 24.* And then looking back upon the Dangers they have been in, and wherein other Men are now, their Joy shall be the greater, when they see what Miseries they are clear'd from, and what Happiness they enjoy.

In Earth no Joy or Happiness so great, but will breed a Satety, and we grow weary of them, for Novelty and Change is grafted in our very Natures. But we shall never be satisfied with the Joys of Heaven, for the *Tree of Life bears twelve Sorts of Fruits, bearing Fruit every Month, twelve Manner of Fruits, Rev. 21.* Which is aptly applied to the Diversity of Joys, those that strive to enter at the strait Gate, and take Heaven by Violence, shall enjoy as a Reward of their Labour and Sufferings: So that you see, that there is a continual Change and Variety of Delights and Joys still pleasing the Minds, and ravishing the Senses with immortal Pleasures.

And thus I have shewed you the Joys of Heaven as they are revealed to us, or as our Imagination.

Imagination can reach them, though in Reality they wonderfully surpass all that can be said of them, as much as the Sun in its Lustre, does the smallest glimmering Star; for no Tongue is able to express to them as they are in themselves, till the Party who would do it, comes to the Possession of them, which makes us more eager after them. because we shall not be long without them. For the time of this Life is but short, and the time of thy Tryal in this World is but in a manner a Moment; if our time here should be a thousand Years, what is it to one Day in Heaven, which has no Night.

And as the Torments of Hell and endless, so are the Joys of Heaven beyond all time, and as they are Remediless, (for out of Hell there is no Redemption) so are the Joys of the Blessed above, without any Change or Alteration.

Thus have I shewed you the Joys of the Kingdom of Heaven in Part, but their Fulness I cannot utter, nor you conceive, we can only guess at them. *St. Paul* being wrapp'd up into the third Heaven, saw and heard things unutterable, himself seems not to be able to reveal what he saw there and heard, and therefore in a manner he passeth it over in a Silence, as a Thing unlawful for him to speak, or as some Translation have it, beyond Man's Utterance: For all the Learned Men in the World, are not able to give a lively Description of the Joys of Heaven, as in themselves they really are, for no mortal Eye has seen them, or Heart can conceive them.

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Then how can any Tongue declare them in their full Perfections. But by what I have already said, it is sufficient for our Instruction and Comfort, for things that are not reveal'd, belong to God alone. If I should fill your Heads with my own Devices and Imaginations, as many do, I should but delude you, therefore be not any of you desirous to know more than is fit and convenient; for when we have said all we know, no Man can fully express the Truth of these Joys. But that which we do know, let it be instructive, and let us leave off to search where God will give no Understanding: Hidden they are and unknown, that we might the more earnestly desire them, for known things he gives out of Love: yet here is enough revealed unto us, to enflame our Love, and raise our Desires to long and wish for them, and consequently to spur us on in using the Means, whereby we may attain to them in his good time, who has provided those Joys for all that love and fear him, walking uprightly according to his Word, and in a ready Obedience to his Holy Commandments, the Consideration of which might be sufficient to confirm us that there be not in any of us an unfaithful Heart, to depart from the living God: Beside, who in his Senses would deprive himself of these Joys, if there were no other, but such as our own Minds might imagine, or our own Heart conceive.

The profitable Instructions thereof that hence may arise, are more than I can utter, yet give me leave to recite some for your Satisfaction;
for

for when it pleased God, I wrote this for your Good, it was with Comfort, and therefore I doubt not but that you that hear it : will bear it also with Comfort ; for I my self who perhaps have searched more than any of you, am at a Loss to declare the wonderful Working of the Lord.

First, Let us learn to grow out of love with the present World, and with the transitory Pleasures and Profits of the same, which will stand us in no stead at the last Day, so that we may prepare our Journey to our long and wish'd Home, and to those Houses and Heavenly Habitations, whose Leases shall never expire, to our Heavenly Canaan, and to this new and most Beautiful Jerusalem. And though Necessity and the Needs of Nature require us to use many things, yet let us be careful so to use them, as not to abuse them, nor our selves in the Use of them. Let us be modest in all our Conversation, not toiling our selves to heap up Riches, when we know not who shall gather them up after us ; or if we did, it would nothing avail us in the Hour of Death, much less in the Day of Judgment. But let us labour to fight the good Fight, that so finishing our Course, we may with Joy lay down this mortal Life, in exchange for that Life which is immortal.

Howbeit, Men for the most part are so bewitched with the Pleasures of this World, that no Exhortation will prevail to draw our Minds from thence, which thing may be lively represented by a Parable of a certain Commonwealth, who were accusom'd to choose their

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King from amongst the poorest sort of People, and advance him to great Honour for a time, and then to dispoil him of his Felicity, and banish him naked into an Island of a far Country where he lived in great Misery. Which another King looking into, took Care to prevent; against it came to be his own Turn, by sending before hand a great Treasure into that Island, whereunto he was daily in Danger to be sent; which when it happen'd, he went to that Island with Joy, because his Treasure was there before him, and was received with great Honour and Respect.

Now this City or Common wealth, is this present World, which advanceth poor Men to Authority; that is, such as come naked into this World, and on a sudden, when they look least for it, pulls them down, and sends them naked into the Graves; when bringing not Treasure with them, they can expect no Favour, but Eternal Misery.

The wise King who prevents this Calamity, is every one who in this Life, doth endeavour to lay up Treasure in Heaven against the Day of their Death; at which time if their Good Deeds follow them, then shall they be happy Men: But if they come without Oil in their Lamps, then there is nothing for them to expect, but this terrible Sentence, *Depart from me, I know you not.*

The Sum of Money is not so much our good Deeds, as the Forgiveness of our manifold Offences, and the Amendment of our Sinful Lives. That which we are so greatly in
love

Love withal, the Apostle adviseth us against, *Love not the World, neither the things that are in the World*, 1 John 2. and he gives us this Reason for it, *because the World passeth away*: But he that doth the Will of God abideth for ever.

The Joys of Heaven, and the Desires of the World, are directly Opposites; worldly Pleasures hinder us from mounting up so high, wherein we may be liken'd to the Grasshopper, who liveth and dieth is the same Ground, it hath Wings, and hoppeth up a little, but presently falleth down again to the Ground; so many of us have good Motions unto Godliness, but we return strait to our old Affections to this World, as though all our Portion were only in this Life.

The Fowls that feed grossly, never fly high, and they who feed their Hearts with things below, cannot have their Affections above. But as the Ox is fatted in the Pasture, and the Bird singeth sweetly, and feedeth without Fear, and suddenly the one is driven to the Slaughter, and the other is taken in the Snare; so they that be worldly minded, are lulled asleep in Security, until the time that Death overtakes them, and endless Destruction overwhelms them: But where is that Man who can say with the Apostle, *I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is best of all*: For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a Country, Heb. 11. 16. *desiring a better Country than is to be found in this World*; that is, a Heavenly Country, and for them hath God prepared a City, Heb.

13. 14. for here we have no continuing City, no continuing Habitation. If we desire then to attain this Heavenly Place, we must forsake this Earthly Tabernacle. Christ himself was not free from Affliction, for he cry'd out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me.* We must go first to Mount Calvary, before we can come to Mount Olivet. Our Graves are but so many Folds, which Death brings us unto, and keep our Bodies till the General Day of the Resurrection; for Death is but a Door of Entrance to the Crown of Glory. Woe be to you, saith Christ, that now laugh, for you shall weep, and therefore happy shall they be in another World, who have in a good Cause suffered Wrongs, committing themselves unto God.

The time of Heavenly Joys is in Scripture, compar'd to the Harvest, and what care doth every Man take to provide the best Seed, that their Harvest might prove good? The Psalmist saith, *They shall reap in Joy, and whoso goes on his way weeping, and beareth good Seed, shall come and bring his Sheaves with him.* Therefore let me exhort you as the Apostle doth, Gal. 6. 7. *Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a Man soweth, that shall he also reap; for he that soweth to the Flesh, shall of the Flesh reap Corruption. But he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life Everlasting: So that you see that such as our Seed is, such shall be our Harvest.* The Date of this Life is but short, but the Remembrance of a Life well led, will be a Comfort to us forever; and in the End of Time, prove an E d-
less Harvest, to supply up with a Blessed Crop
of

of Joy and Pleasure, still gathering, still encreasing never diminishing, but springing to Life and Immortality.

Be careful then in this, and abstain from fleshy Lusts, bridle and keep them under, for they war against the Spirit: The last thing in the aforesaid Chapter is, that there shall enter into this Heavenly Jerusalem no unclean thing. And as the Prophecy of Zachariah, 14. 21. In that Day there shall be no more the Canaanitee, in the House of the Lord of Hosts. Now the Canaanites were a lewd People, and for the same were driven out of the Land; and if they were not worthy to dwell on Earth, much less shall they be worthy to be received into Heaven. Dearly Beloved, saith the Apostle St. Peter, 1 Epist. 2. 11. abstain from fleshly Lusts, bridle them, keep them under, for they war against the Soul. Col. 3. 1. If then ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right Hand of God: Set your Affections on things above, and not on things on the Earth, and mortify your immoderate affections and evil Concupiscence. Remember this Peremptory Word, No unclean thing shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but blessed are the pure in Heart, for they shall see God. Let us then cleanse our selves from all Filthiness and Defilements of the Flesh and Spirit, and grow up into full Holiness in the Fear of God, for they that thus do his Will shall enter in o the New Jerusalem, and shall have a Right to the Tree of Life. But without shall Dogs, and all unclean Persons, Rev. 22. 44. And let us work out our Salvation with Fear and Trem-

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Trembling, being desirous to receive a Kingdom which cannot be shaken ; let us pray for Grace to serve God, that we may please him with Reverence and godly Fear. And seeing we have precious Promises, 2 Pet. 1. 4. and that more sure than the Heaven and the Earth; *Let us cleanse our selves from all Filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit, perfecting Holiness in the Fear of God ; for as they that thus do his Will, shall enter through the Gates into the City, and their Right shall be to the Tree of Life, so without are Dogs and all unclean Persons ; let not then this my last Exhortation be forgotten among you, Enter in at the strait Gate ; for it is the wide Gate and broad Way that leadeth to Destruction, and many there be that go in thereat ; Because strait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way that leadeth to Life, and few there be that find it.*

Now I may add unto those, one of the greatest Joys of all, and that is God's Mercy, which is evident to us in this Life, as well as the Life to come, for without that, no Man can enter into that Place where true Joys are to be found ; for in the strictness of his Justice, our Sins would debar us of all the Happies we hope for in Heaven, our first Parents being by God's just Anger, and according to their Desert, cast out of Paradise, and an Angel set with a Sword drawn to keep the Way, that no Flesh should return thither, unless by God's Mercy we enter through the strait Gate. Which is called the Rich Mercy of God, because no Treasure is comparable to it, he being a God of Long-Sufferance, Patience and Forbearance : A
God

God slow to Anger, and of great loving Kindness, not willing any should perish, but that all should be saved: And because the Tongue of Man cannot speak it, let Angels proclaim it, as we read *Luke 2. 14. Glory be to God in the highest, and on Earth Peace, Good will towards Men.*

Let every Man and Woman then take Care how they abuse this Mercy, which can only open the Gates of Heaven to them, lest when they stand in need of it, his severe Justice takes Place to their Destruction.

And now I come, in the last Place, to shew you the Right way of dying well, which brings all the Joy and Happiness I have been mentioning, as a Recompence for our Travel and Labour in this World.

First, By the Virtue of Christ's Death, Death ceaseth to be any more a Terror or Affrightment to us, but appears as a Friend, and opens the Door to let in the Soul into a happy Eternity, he being the Key of our Graves, hath opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all Believers. For Death is only terrible, when it is jyned with God's Wrath and Indignation against Sinners, and we are not defend'd with the Shield of Faith, when he approacheth; for in dying we should rejoyce in the Lord, since the Corruption of our Nature is thereby abolish'd, and our Sanctification thereby accomplish'd, Consider then what Happiness it is to see the Glory of God's Majesty Face to Face, and to abide with God and the Holy Angels for ever. Which being assur'd of in our Consciences, let Death come when it will, we shall rest contented, whether

whether we wake or sleep, or whatever we do, let us bear in Mind the Noise of the Trumpet, *Arise ye Dead, and come to Judgment*, knowing that the Power of Death lies in our Sins; and therefore to weaken the Power of Death, let us repent of our Sins, amend our Lives, and relie wholly upon the Mercies of God, that we may with Comfort say with St. Paul, *I live not, but Christ liveth in me.*

By Death then you see, there is a Removal of present Miseries, and by it, all Miseries that may happen are prevented; for let Death seize us when it please, we shall still remain in the Covenant, and at last taken up into Everlasting Life. But it is too late to begin to live well, when we must of Necessity die, and depart out of this Life. Can any Man think that God will be content, that we should lay our old and rotten Bodies upon his Altar, when we have liv'd all our Youthful time in Revelling and Wantonness! What was the Reason that Christ loved his Disciple *John* better than any of the others, but because he came to him in his Youth. God will not be our Staff in our Age, if we do not serve him in our Youth; *Solomon* the wisest of all Men, adviseth us, to remember our Creator in the Days of our Youth. We must not think to come into the World, as *Caro* did in the Theatre, only to go out of it again; or to imagine that the World was made for Man, as the Sea was for the *Leviathan*, to take his Pleasure in; no, we must strive to observe God's Commandments, which will bring rest to our Souls. That Man can never shoot well,
who

who has not his Eye upon the Mark, neither can a Man live well, that hath not his Mind upon the Day of his Death, and we must remember that our Bodies when they are in the Earth, are but like Seed that is sown, for they shall rise again. *When the Trumpet shall blow, it shall be both loud and shrill: No Ear but shall hear the Sound, the Dampness of the Earth shall not hinder it, nor the Depth of the Grave excuse us: No Place tho' never so remote, shall hinder this Sound, for it shall be universal, and in every Corner of the Earth shall this Trumpet be heard.* The Lord calls to Man by this Prophet *Isaiah*, saying, *Earth, Earth, Earth, hear the Word of the Lord, to put us in Mind, we are but Earth, But St. Paul saith, our Bodies shall be changed at the last Day, even in the Twinkling of an Eye, and then we shall have a Resurrection, First, Of our Bodies from the Grave. And Secondly, Of our Souls from Sin. Notwithstanding the Faith devoured some, as it did Coran, Darban and Abraham, and yet they must come to Judgment. It is a Divine Work, and is past our Understanding; therefore let us rather admire God's infinite Wisdom and Goodness, than be too curious to search into them, For our Corruption, shall put on Incorruption, and our mortal Bodies, shall put on Immortality, though we have lain a long time in the Grave, mouldring and consuming away.*

We all know when we have set a Root in the Ground, it must lie all the Winter, and it is seemingly dead, but in the Spring it revives by Vertue of the Sun, and so will it be with us at
the

the Day of our Resurrection; therefore let us endeavour while we live here on Earth, that we be found as white as the Snow in *Salmon*, and clothed with the Robes of Christ's Righteousness. We are at best but like a painted Wall, one Winter's Storm quite defaces the Beauty of it; so one Blast of Death carries us quite away to the Grave and Earth again; therefore saith the Prophet, *The Dust shall return to the Earth as it was, and the Spirit shall return to God that gave it*, Eccl. 12. 7.

Seeing then we must all die, and that Death is only terrible to the Wicked, it is our own Fault to delay and put off our Repentance, till it is too late; let us do as *St. Paul* did, who joyfully cried out, *O Death, where is thy Sting? O Grave, where is thy Victory?* Certainly the Meditation of Death makes it familiar to us, for otherwise the Thoughts of Death will so affrighten and astonish us, that our Minds will be disorder'd.

That Man must die, common Experience shews, scarce a Night passes, but we meet one or other going to their long Home, and the Sound of the Bell daily informs us some one or other is departed out of this Life, which is so uncertain that is often compar'd to things of momentary Duration; as a Span long, a Vapour, a Shadow, the Grass that withereth, and a Flower that fadeth. Death stealeth on us unawares, and our lying down at Night, and rising in the Morning, is an Emblem of Death, and the Resurrection. Let us not then be like the rich Fool in the Gospel, who promis'd him

self the Enjoyment of great Riches, and many Years of Happiness, whose Soul was that very Night required of him, and Death fatally disappointed him of all his Expectations. Let every Man and Woman then be continually on the Watch, so that when Death comes, we may be ready to embrace it, knowing that we shall rise again to the Life immortal.

Let us not then put off the Thoughts of Dying, as *Felix* did *St. Paul*, saying, *I will hear thee another time.* The Prodigal must forsake his Sins of Wantonness, as *Zaccheus* did, who came down hastily, and received Christ joyfully. We must not defer time, but must with *Zaccheus* make Christ Overseer, who said, *Behold Lord, half of my Goods I give to the Poor, and if I have done Wrong to any, I will restore him four fold.* God doth not regard the Extension, but the Intention, not only the Tongue, but the Heart. We must put the Sword to the Throat of Sins, and cut them off as *Phineas* pierced *Zimri* and *Cosbi* through and through. We must not have our beloved *Delilah* Sins, and say as *Naaman* did, *The Lord be merciful to me a Sinner*, but pray with holy *David*, *The Lord be merciful to me a Sinner, cleanse my Soul from my secret Sins, from my Sins of Omission, and Sins of Commission, which if not repented of, we shall be cast into Hell for ever.* What would *Dives* have given, that he might have been set to his five Brethren. But *Abraham* told him, it could not be, if they would not believe *Moses* and the Prophets, neither would they believe, though one rose from the Dead.

It was *Jerusalem's* Sin, that they remembred not their latter End, and our Saviour wept over it, because they would not believe, and consider the things that belong'd to its Peace. Death comes swiftly, not on Foot, but on Horseback, and on a pale Horse : Delays in this Case are dangerous, because our time in this World is uncertain. Let us therefore remember. our Death, and leave Sin, that Sin may not leave us in the Grave ; for if it does, a severe Judgment will take hold of us at the Resurrection.

A dying Man must not so much fix his Mind on the Pangs of Death, as on that Blessed Estate of Eternal Life enjoyed after Death, which will appear *First*, In the Examination of our Hearts and Ways. *Secondly*, In the Confession of our Sins. And *Thirdly*, In begging Pardon, so that we may be reconcil'd to God in Jesus Christ.

We must look upon Death in the Glass of the Gospel, as a sweet Sleep, and not in the Glass of the Law, as a Pit, full to Destruction. For Death of it self is nothing, it is our ill Consciences that makes us afraid. The very Sighs, Sobs, and Groans, of a repenting and believing Heart, are effectual Prayers before God ; such as, *Lord have Mercy on me, Christ have Mercy on me, Lord have Mercy on me.* Remember the last Words of a dying Man mention'd in the Holy Scriptue, *O Lord I have waited for thy Salvation ; Father into thy Hands I commit my Spirit, Lord Jesus receive my Soul.* And then will our Saviour meet us, and say, *Come ye Blessed of my Father,*

receive the Kingdom prepared for you, from the beginning of the World.

St. Paul saith, No Man liveth to himself, and no Man dieth to himself, for whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord ; Whether we live or die, therefore we are the Lord's. Which Words teach us, that in the Pangs of Death we should resign our selves unto the Lord ; as David did, saying, into thy Hands I commend my Spirit, knowing that God would receive him.

The Consideration of which ought to raise our Souls inflam'd with Divine Love, far above the Level of this World, and give 'em the Wings of an Eagle, that they may fly up to Heaven in Contemplation of those Joys they sigh for in this Vale of Tears, and by Faith stedfastly to behold their Blessed Redeemer, sitting at the right Hand of God, obtaining for us a Crown of Life and immortal Glory.

Therefore I intreat you to conclude with this following Prayer, which is the Substance of what I have already written, That God Almighty may guide both our hearts and Minds, to pray for a pious Dissolution out of this Life, whensoever it shall happen.

O that Men would therefore Praise the Lord, who does such Wonderful Things for the Children of Men, which the Tongues of Men and Angels are not able to express, and are ever beyond our Imaginations till we come to enjoy them in full Glory, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

*A Godly Prayer to the Effect of the foregoing
Sermon, proper for any Man or Woman on
their Death-Bed.*

O Almighty and Everlasting God, from whose Face the Heaven and the Earth fled away, lead me into the Way that I must go, so that I may in the End find my Saviour J^esus Christ, who sitteth on the White Throne, and be thought worthy to appear in the Presence of the Bridegroom. I am weary of the wicked and sinful World, and desire to be with Christ, which is best of all. O Lord J^esus who knowest how long I have to live, and the Hour of my Death: My Days are in thy Hand, for thou hast made my Days but as a Span long, and my Age is nothing unto thee, therefore teach me so to number my Days, that I may apply my Heart unto Wisdom. But above all, deliver me from the Body of Death, which the very Thoughts of, makes my Soul to tremble, and lift up my Thoughts on high, so that I may sing Praises and Thanks to thee in thy Heavenly Choir, with Angels and Saints.

I desire to go from Darkness to Light, from Pain to Pleasure, from the Troubles of this Life to Eternal Rest. Come then, Lord J^esus, come quickly, and dissolve me from this Body, that now longeth to be with thee. A little before thy Death, thou didst pray thy Father, saying, *Father, These whom thou hast given me, I will that they shall be where I am, that they may*

be with me, and see my Glory which thou hast given me ; for thou hast loved me before the Foundation of the World ; Therefore, O Lord Jesus, be present at my right Hand, when I die, and let not the Devil have any Advantage over me, nor the wicked approach to hurt me, but say unto my poor Soul, Soul be of good Comfort, thy Sins are forgiven thee, This Day thou shalt be with me in Paradise. And at the Resurrection of the Saints, O sweet Jesus, raise my Body to Life Eternal, so that I may with Joy appear before thee, my Judge and Advocate, and hear that comfortable Sentence, Come thou Blessed of my Father, possess the Kingdom prepared for thee from the Foundation of the World. O come then Lord Jesus, come quickly from thy Kingdom of Grace, to thy Kingdom of Glory ; and not for any Merits of mine, but for the Sake of Him, who is the Son of thy Love, and Lamb of thy Bosom ; to whom with the Father and Holy Ghost, be ascribed all Honour, Glory, Power, Might, Majesty, and Thanksgiving from me, and all holy Men and Women, now and for evermore.

A Morning Prayer for a private Person, or Family.

OLORD JESUS, Judge of all Men, whether alive or dead, send thy Holy Spirit to instruct me, that I may daily live in Expectation of thy Coming in Glory, and ever be mindful

ful of the last Day of my Life; as the happiest Day of my Redemption, expecting thy Coming as my Saviour, Advocate, Surety, and Bishop of my Soul. But what will that avail me, except thou, O my Saviour, keep and guide me, that I might avoid those horrible Vices, which in this sinful and degenerate Age, doth Reign amongst the Wicked and Ungodly; such is Drunkenness, Adultery and Covetousness, being certain that no such shall inherit the Kingdom of God. And that I set not my Affections too much on things of this World, as Riches, Prophets, and Preferments, with the Pleasure of which, our Hearts are often carried away, so that we seldom come to a serious Contemplation of things belonging to our Peace and future Happiness: But give me Grace to seek after Christ, and him Crucify'd, so that with *St. Paul*, I may desire to be dissolv'd, and be with Christ; in Comparison of which, I count all things but loss for the Excellency of Christ Jesus, my Lord.

Lead me, O Good, O Gracious, and Merciful Lord and Saviour, and guide me, I beseech thee, in the Way of all Truth and Righteousness, and so govern all my Thoughts, Words, and Actions this Day, that I may not wilfully commit any thing that might offend thy Divine Majesty, and that all my Doings may be to thy Glory, the Good of thy Church, and the Discharge of my Duty in this Life; in order to which, deliver me from all Temptations and Afflictions of this sinful World, and from all mine Enemies both publick and private, and

from all the Temptations of the Devil, the deadly Enemy of Mankind. But above all, en-
flame of my Heart and Affections, with a fervent
Zeal of thy sacred Word, that I may embrace
thy Holy Religion, and know thy Blessed Will,
and Walk in thy Way ; and to do which,
strengthen me with thy Holy Spirit, boldly and
constantly to profess the Honour and Service
of thy Great and Holy Name, lest at any
time through the Frailty of the Flesh, or the
Corruptions of my own Nature, or the Temp-
tations of the Devil, I fall off from my Duty
to thee : O Lord, strengthen my weak Faith
through Jesus Christ, kindle it more and more
in Fervency and Love towards thee, and in
Love and Charity towards all Men. Suffer me
not, O Jesus, to receive thy Grace any more in
vain, but grant that it may prove as good
Seed sown in fertile Ground, so that I
may bring forth the Fruits of Repentance
in Holiness of Life and Conversation, to
thy Honour and Glory, and the future Good
of my Soul and Body, and therein give me a
contented Mind with my Condition, and all
other Blessings which thou, O Lord God, of
thy abundant Goodness in Mercy hast bestow'd
on me, that I may use them soberly as becomes
me, and be truly thankful to thee for them ;
therefore grant me Patience in all my Troubles
and Afflictions which may daily happen unto
me. And above all, O dear Father, grant
that I do not repine at thy Fatherly Cor-
rection, I well knowing that Vengeance is
thine

thine, and that in due Season, thou wilt repay it.

Keep, O Good Father, my wandering Will and Desires from all evil Thoughts, my Tongue from prophane Cursing and Swearing, Evil-speakings Lying and Slandering and my Body in Temperance, Soberness, and Chastity, not coveting nor desiring other Men's Goods, but that I may learn and labour truly to get my own Living. Let all my Love, Faith, Hope, Delight and Confidence be only upon thee. And open my Heart to have Pity and Compassion upon all the poor distressed Members of Jesus Christ, whether they be afflicted in Body, or Mind. Give me the Gift of Chastity, that I possess my Vessel, which is the Temple of the Holy Ghost, with Sanctification, and not in the Lusts of the Flesh as the Wicked and Foolish do, who know not God, nor Jesus Christ whom he has sent; and grant that every Day more and more, I may become sorrowful for my Sins and Transgressions that are past, and which I have so wilfully committed. Accept, O Lord, of these our Petitions, as also of our Praises and Thanksgivings, for all thy Mercies and Benefits which thou in thy tender Mercy hast from time to time bestowed upon me. Let thy mighty Hand and out stretched Arm, O Lord, be still my Defence, And thy Mercy in Jesus Christ be my Salvation, Thy Holy Word my Instruction, and thy Holy Spirit my Comfort all my Days, so that I may continually perform that which thou hast commanded me, and daily live in the Fear of thy Holy Name, to the Intent

that I may die in thy Favour, and then rise to Life Immortal with my Lord Jesus Christ, to dwell with him in Heaven for evermore, which is the only Happiness I hope and pray for, not for any of my own Merits, but for the Merits and Mercy of Jesus Christ, who came into the World to suffer Death upon the Cross to save Mankind, and who hath taught us thus to pray, *Our Father, which art in Heaven, &c.*

An Evening Prayer for a private Person, or Family.

O Most Great and Mighty Lord God, and Merciful Father, I a poor wretched and undone sinful Wretch, return unto thee Praise and Thanks, for all thy Goodness which thou hast been pleas'd from time to time to bestow upon me, begging of thee to hear my Supplications, and to grant my Requests in what shall seem to thee convenient for me, thou knowing my Necessities better than I that ask; who have been negligent of every good Work, but run headlong into every thing that is evil, yet if thou please to wash me with one Drop of my Lord and Saviour's precious Blood, it is I know for certainty, sufficient to make my Sins, though as red as Scarlet, to become as white as Snow. Oh! Let not my own Sins, nor the, Sins of my Forefathers ever be numbred up against me but be thou my God, and let me be thy Servant. Forgive me, O good Father, all the Sins that I have committed from Day to Day against thy Divine Majesty, and Suffer me not, O Lord, to offend thee

thee any more, that neither Sin nor Satan, nor any unruly Passion may any longer reign in my mortal Body, for I confess with shame and confusion of Face, I have heretofore done wickedly, and have broken all thy Commandments, for which thou mightest in Justice have cast me into Hell. But thou, O God, who art Gracious and Merciful, slow to Anger, and of great Kindness, I hope will forgive me all that is past, and pour upon me the holy Spirit of Wisdom, that it may be a Lanthorn to my Feet, and a Light to my Steps. Increase my Faith, O Heavenly Father, that I do not swerve from thy Word at any time, but increase in me Hope and Love, shew thy Mercy upon me, and enlighten the natural Blindness and Darkness of my Heart, by thy Heavenly Grace, that I may daily be renewed by the same, and be pleased to purge the Grossness of my Understanding, which hath been choked with the Cares and Pleasures of this World? so that I may profitably read, hear, and understand thy Will, believe and praise the same in my Life and Conversation; all carnal Desires and Lusts of the Flesh being mortified in me: But most chiefly I intreat thee, O Lord, to defend me against the Temptations and subtile Deceit of the Devil, who goes daily about seeking whom he may devour. And should I happen to fall into Sin, thro' the frailty of my Nature, I beseech thee to give me true Repentance, that I may amend my Life for the time to come, and become truly Religious, and increase in all Holiness and Godliness of Living, to the Praise and Glory of thy Holy Name. Finally, for as much as it has pleased thee to make the Night for Man to Rest, and ordain'd for him the Day to follow this honest Labour and Vocation, grant, O Heavenly Father, that I may

so

So enjoy my Rest, that my Soul may watch, like the wise Virgin, with the Oyl of Faith in my Heart, for the Second Coming of my Lord Jesus Christ, and that I may fully set my Mind to love, fear, and to rest in thee: And then, O Lord, awaken me, that I may behold the Day with Comfort, so that when I have run the short Race of this mortal Life, thou mayest be pleased to summon me to partake of a better in thy Kingdom, where I shall for ever remain with thee in Glory, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. In whose Name I beg all these Graces, in that short but excellent Form of Prayer, which Christ himself hath taught us, saying,

OUR Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy Will be done in Earth, As it is in Heaven. Give us this Day our daily Bread. And forgive us our Trespases, As we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into Temptation: But deliver us from Evil: for thine is the Kingdom, And the Power and the Glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

F I N I S.

THE
Shepherd's Tent:
OR A *Christ's Sheep*
FOLD
FOR
Christ's Sheep.
As it was Preach'd in
Two SERMONS
UPON
The First Chapter of *Canticles*,
Ver. 7. 8.

*Incline your Ear, and come unto me; hear, and you
shall live, and I will make an Everlasting Covenant
with you, even the sure Mercies of David,
Isaiah 55. 3.*

London: Printed for James Hodges, at the Look-
ing-Glass on London-Bridge. 1737.

A Contemplation upon DEATH.

Death knocks as boldly at the rich Man's Door,
as at the meanest Cottage of the Poor ;
It spares not old nor young, high nor low,
But all must yield to its unerring Blow.
Both Men and Beasts, Fish, Fowls, and Trees that spring,
Must yield to Death sent out by Christ our King.
Nothing on Earth's more certain unto Men,
Nor more uncertain how, or where, or when.
The Sand runs in the Glass, so runs our Breath,
And every Moments Life runs nearer Death.
Which if that Men would once consider well,
Not knowing but th' next night be their Passing Bell.
They wou'd repent before it is too late,
And welcome Death which Sinners tremble at.
Whose Trumpet warns us, and his Warning past,
Like verdent Grass, his Sycbe cuts down at last.
Tho' Death is terrible to Flesh and Blood,
Yet it brings solid Comfort to the Good.
Their Miseries and Troubles out of Date,
And unto Life eternal Death's a Gate.
To the Ungodly, by the Doom Supernal,
Death is the Door unto the Death eternal.
Where they for ever shall be in Fetters bound,
And cry for Mercy, which shall ne'er be found.
So all that shall be, are, or ever was.
To endless Joy or Pain, by Death must pass.
His Coming's most unsure, but come he will,
And when he comes, he never fails to kill.



T H E

Shepherd's Tent:

O R, A

Fold for Christ's Sheep.

Cant. 1. 7, 8.

7. Tell me (*O thou whom my Soul loveth*) where thou feedest; where thou makest thy Flock to rest at Noon, for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the Flocks of thy Companions.
8. If thou knowest not, *O thou fairest amongst Women*, go thy Way forth by the Footsteps of the Flock, and feed thy Kids beside the Shepherd's Tent.

BEFORE I enter upon the Text, I shall say something concerning the Order of placing this Book, the Title of it, and the Matter therein contained. As for the Order, in Likeness, as there were three Degrees in the Material Temple built by Solomon. The First, For the People,

ple. The *Second*, For the Priests and Levites. And the *Third*, The *Sanctum Sanctorum*, where none but the High Priest could enter, and that but once a Year. Even so in this Spiritual Temple, he hath erected three Courts; *First*, an outward Court, which is the Book of *Proverbs*, easy to be understood by the People. *Secondly*, *Ecclesiastes*, which leads Men no further in the Way of Godliness. And *Thirdly*, His excellent Book of *Canticles*, wherein, none but those that delight in Heavenly Mysteries, can see the Affection of Christ Jesus toward his Church, and every Member thereof; as also the Church's Love towards him, and the Benefit she reapeth by him.

Secondly, As for the Titles of that Book, It is the *Song of Songs*, the most Divine Piece of all Solomon's Writing, wherein he decyphers out unto us the most perfect Love of Jesus Christ towards his Spouse the Church, who he makes in Love with one another, which may serve as to the Book it self, and therefore I shall proceed in the next Place to the Consideration of the Words of the Text.

Tell me, O thou, whom my Soul loveth.

In the Beginning of this Chapter the Church speaks to Christ, earnestly desiring to embrace him, preferring him before all the Pleasures of this World: In the *third Verse* she expresseth her Unworthiness to embrace him. And in the *Fourth*, she confesseth her Inability and Want of Power, and desireth to be beautified with his Graces, to become a meer Spouse for him,
whom

whom her Soul loveth. And in the *Fifth*, she owns her Imperfection, confessing that though by Nature she is full of Corruptions and Pollutions, yet being washed in Christ's Blood, *she is fair and comely*. And then she proceeds in the Text, *First*, That Jesus Christ would shew her where he Feeds his Flock with his holy Word, to the End that he should feed her as he fed his Flocks in former time. And *Secondly*, where he covers them from the scorching Heat of Persecution. And *Lastly*, she gives the Reason, *for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the Flocks of thy Companions*.

First, The Person to whom she seeks for Direction in Christ Jesus, the Saviour and Redeemer of his Church, whom she describes *O thou, whom my Soul loveth*, which Love far exceeds all other Love, and is the best in the World. By which we may see, with what Affection every Believer ought to love Jesus Christ; namely, with the greatest Affection of Love, that the Soul of Man is capable of; with a Love that enflames the Heart with Divine Raptures; for if any thing in this World be lov'd like unto him, all is in vain, he requires the whole Heart when he says, *Son, give me thy Heart*. And therefore all that will be his Followers, must from the Bottom of their Heart say, *O thou whom my Soul loveth*: Nay, so earnestly was the Love of the Church towards Christ, that she crys out, *stay me with Flaggons, and comfort me with Apples for I am sick of Love*, Cant. 2. 5. And St. Peter, whose Love was so great that he died for Christ, being interrogated whether

whether he lov'd him or not ; with Concern answer'd, *Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.* And Mary in Testimony of her Love, wash'd his Feet with Tears, and wiped them with the Hairs of her Head ; which so mov'd our Blessed Saviour, that he hath left upon Record this Testimony of her, *that she loved much ;* for the Lord hath commanded us to love him with all our Hearts, with all our Souls, and with all our Might, Deut. 6. 5. he will not be satisfied to be beloved in part, but requires the whole Man, we must say with holy David, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none upon Earth that I desire beside thee,* Psal. 73. 25. *We cannot serve God and Mammon,* we must not part our Love to the World, and the Lusts thereof, but Christ must have it all. And the Reasons are many for

First, He is our Spouse and Husband, whose Name is the Lord of Hosts. Isa. 54. 3. And the Holy Ghost bids us *be glad, and rejoice, and give Glory to him, for the Marriage of the Lamb is come, and his Wife has made her self ready,* Rev. 19. 7. Now our Service and Worship of God, is as it were a Marriage of our Souls to Christ, when in our Baptism we betroth our selves to him as a Husband, entring into Covenant with him to keep only to him as long as we shall live. And as a Man cannot endure that another should have share in his Wife's Love, so he is a jealous God, Exod. 20. 4. And though Death may, and does separate Man and Wife, yet if we love Christ, we shall never be separated from him, but our Souls shall be for ever

ever closely united to him, and he will feed us here, and we shall reign with him from Everlasting to Everlasting. But if we shall be so false to him, to renounce our Baptismal Vow, and give our selves up to the sinful Lusts of the Flesh, and the Delusions thereof, he will give us a Bill of Divorcement, and cast us off, as shameless Strumpets to the Miseries of the World, and Eternal Torments hereafter.

Secondly, We should love Christ above all, because he loved us first, *We loved him, because he loved us first*, 1 Joh. 4. 19. for he loved us when we were his Enemies, and in love to us, he endur'd Poverty, Distress, Scorn, Abuses, Stripes, and even Death itself, whose Bands he broke, so that he could not be holden of Death in the Grave, or prevented to ascend on high, to draw us after him with the Cords of his Love, where he sits at the right Hand of his Father continually interceeding for us, stopping the Hand of his Justice in Mercy, from executing Justice on us for our evil Deed. And as Apostle Paul witnesseth, *You hath he quickened, who were dead in Sin*, Eph. 2. 1. which he has sufficiently manifested, *In washing us from our Sins in his own Blood*, Rev. 1. 5. Greater Love than this, can no Man shew, and shall not we love him again. Suppose a Man were taken Captive by the Turks, where he had been along time kept in Bondage, think ye that he would not be very thankful to any Man that should redeem him from his Slavery. Much more we who are in Bondage by the Subtility of Satan, ought to return Thanks for our Redemption from

from Eternal Torments, by God who is rich in Mercy, for his great Love wherewith he loved us, even when he were dead in Sin, he quickened us together with Christ, by whose Grace we are saved, Eph. 2. 4. Hereby saith St. John, we perceive the Love of God, because he laid down his Life for us. In whom saith the Apostle, we have Redemption through his Blood, Eph. 1. 7, Which Love being so very extraordinary, one would think to every ingenious Mind, should constrain us to love him again.

Thirdly, Because Christ Jesus is most excellent in himself, and above all things to be desired, as the Church saith, *My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand, and fairer than the Children of Men.* In the World we observe some are beloved, because they are Beautiful, Rich, and Honourable, which prevails very much in this World to draw Men into their Esteem; but all this is nothing in Respect of Christ, who is the Store-house of all Mercies, the Lord of Heaven and Earth, and the Son of God shining in Grace and Truth, *Whose Countenance as St. John tells us, out shone the Brightness of the Sun.* In short, he is in all things lovely and desirable, as the Soul of Man can desire, and therefore above all should he be beloved, who is worthy to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power, and Praise, and Dominion both now and for evermore.

What then can we prefer to him that is worthy of our Love and yet here many for a little earthly Dross reject him, making Riches their God, and doing upon the Things of this World

World; as the *Gadarens*, who preferred their Hogs before the Presence of our Saviour; or like *Judas*, who sold him for so small a Sum as thirty Pence; and love their Pleasures as *Druses* did, more than their own Souls; or like the *Bethlemites*, let him lie in the Stable amongst Beast, rather than afford him one Corner in their Hearts: Nay, we even see those that own him, break Covenant with him, and follow their own Lusts, which takes off their Love to spiritual Things; they outwardly pretend indeed to love the Lord Jesus Christ, but in their Works they not only deny him, but say, *we will not have this Man to rule over them.* Consider then, how would any Man be content, that his Wife should say she loves him, and at the same time setting her Heart upon another Man? Much more, how can we imagine God will take it at our Hands, and at the same time, we are dallying with his Enemies, the World, the Lusts thereof. Certainly he will withdraw the Light of his amiable Countenance from such, and cease to shine with his Grace in their Hearts, leaving them to stumble on dark Mountains, and lose their Way to the *Heavenly Canaan*, for robbing him of that Respect which is due to him, and giving his Honour to Sin and Satan.

How then shall such as reject his Love be able to look him in the Face, when he shall come in Flames of Fire, accompanied with ten thousand of his Saints and Angels, to convince all Gainsayers, and render Vengeance on ungodly Sinners.

St. Paul's love was so fervent, That he accounted all things but Dross and Dung, in Comparison of the Love of Christ. It is impossible for a Man to be Religious, that hath no delight in the Word of God, which most Men have no delight in now a days, and therefore no Love in Christ. David made the Testimonies of God his Heritage, and esteem'd them above Gold, yea, above fine Gold.

Secondly, If we love God with all our Hearts, we shall love his Ministers, and all those that he loves, as St. John saith, *Hereby we know that we are passed from Death unto Life, because we love the Brethren*, 1 John 3. 14. And holy David declares publickly, *All my delight is in thy Saints*. It is our Duty to love all, but we must love the Saints with a peculiar and special Love, as Members of the same Body with us; for those that do otherwise, are not in Christ, but in the Love of the World, and the Love of Christ is not in them, for the World loves her own. But because ye are not of the World, but I have chosen you out of the World, therefore the World hateth you, John 15. 19.

Thirdly, If we love our Saviour, we must be obedient to his Laws; for he saith, *If ye love me, keep my Commandments*, John 14. 15. Little Obedience, less Love; and hearty Obedience, hearty Love. And if we love our Saviour as we ought, we cannot endure to have him blasphem'd, his Word despis'd, or his Sabbath prophan'd, but it will grieve us to the Heart, and we will upon all Occasions defend his Cause to the utmost of our Power, as a dutiful Child

Child will that of his Father, or a faithful Servant the Credit of his Master. And furthermore, it will make us be content to endure Trial and Persecution for his sake, even the Loss of Life and Limbs, and all things else for his sake, because he so loved us, that he laid down his Life for us, which may suffice for the Love of the Church to Christ. It remains now, that I speak of a Church's Petition to her beloved Spouse.

Tell me, O thou, whom my Soul loveth where thou feedest, &c.

In this Place, as in many others the Church compares Christ to be a faithful Shepherd, in imitation of the Prophet Isaiah, who saith, *He will gather together his Lambs, Isa. 40. 11.* and of Ezekiel, *Behold I will require my Flock of the Shepherd: and I my self will feed my Sheep, and cause them to rest in quiet, Ezek. 34. 10.* Which is acknowledged of the Prophet-David, *The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want, Psal. 23. 1.* Yea, Christ calls himself so, when he says, *I am the good Shepherd, and know my Sheep, and am known of mine, John 10. 14.*

To this Shepherd, the Church put up her humble Petition in the most devout manner, that he would be pleas'd to tell her where he feeds his Flocks, with the Preaching of the Word, and the Use of the Sacraments, that she may join with them to receive the Benefit of the Holy Sacrament, and be comforted; for tho' the Church of Christ is but one, yet it has many Parts, as the Holy Spirit distinguisheth it,
writing

writing to the Seven Churches in *Asia*. And as there, so here, one part may be under Persecution, and the other in Prosperity ; but in the Text, the Church desires to know where Christ feeds his Sheep according to his Word, that she may joyn with in the Service of God.

By this Petition, we find, it is a true Sign of a Sheep belonging to Christ's Fold, when he hungers and thirst after the Word of God, faithfully preached, and the Sacraments duly Administred, which our Saviour himself observes to be the Mark of his Sheep, *John 10. 27. My Sheep hear my Voice, and I here them : But the Voice of a Stranger will they not hear.* David was very earnest in seeking for God, when he saith, *O how Amiable are thy Tabernacles ? How does my Soul long after thy Altar ? O when shall I come, and appear before the Lord in Sion ?* Even so shou'd every Christian hunger and thirst after Christ in the Spirit, as the Body hungers and thirsts after Nourishment, to refresh it, for the Holy Scriptures are the Nourishment of the Soul and these that hunger not after it, but after the things of this World, starve and pine their Souls to Death, even the second Death, which is the most terrible of all. And this is the miserable Case of too many, who strive to pamper their Bodies, but never mind to refresh their Souls with Spiritual Food ; yea seeing there are but few, very few that desire the Word of God, or can discern what a miserable Condition they are in, but expose themselves to Temptations, which lead them insensibly into Sin before they know what they are about, never so much as reflecting up-
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on themselves to say, *Alas, What have I done?* Jer. 8. 6. Much less having a Desire for the sincere Milk of the Word, or longing for it, as the Infant does for the Mother's Breast, or panting after it, as the Heart does after the Water-Brook, Psal. 42. or as the Church does in the Text, *Tell me where thou feedest thy Flock.* We should do as the Earth doth in time of Drought, open our Mouths until the Lord sends Rain. The Beggar never begs so earnestly, till he feels his own Want, and then he will neither spare Time, Labour, or Words; so till we see our own Wants, we never seek for the Spiritual Food of our Souls: But they are Blessed, who *hunger and thirst after Righteousness*, Mat. 5. 6.

Those that fancy themselves appy, because they feel no Want, are most likely to fall into it, because their imagin'd Plenty makes them negligent to recruit their wanting Stores; so even it is with a Sinner, whose Sins have so far blinded him, that he is not capable of seeing the Want of Grace and Mercy, he stands in need of, to comfort his Soul in the great and terrible Day of the Lord; who for refusing the Love of Christ, will meet with his just Anger, hearing him say, *I know ye not, depart from me all ye Workers of Iniquity*; for he that denies him before Men, he will deny before his Father which is in Heaven.

Now the Reason why we do not hunger nor thirst after the Word of God, is, because we do not consider it is the *Bread and Water of Life*, and without it we can never enjoy the Variety of all those good things, which are

treasured up in the Word, to make us truly happy; for as all good things which we have, and enjoy in this present Life, are Appendances to the Word of God, by which Word, and the Lord's Prayer they are sanctified to us. And no otherwise can it be obtained, but by thirsting after it, as the Blessed Virgin, expresseth it in her Song, *He filleth the Hunger with good things, and the Rich he hath sent empty away,* Luke 1. 53. By the Rich here, are meant those that think they want nothing, when indeed they want every thing, wanting the comfortable Application of God's Word to their Souls; for want of which, the Soul pines away, whilst those that hunger after it, have their Souls satisfied with all good Things in this Life, and lay up a Store of endless Blessings in the Life to come: Which may serve to comfort the distressed Children of God, which labour and travel to hear the Word preach'd, though they meet with mocking and scoffing for it, by Unbelievers. Beside, if we should not eagerly seek after the Word of God, we should never know how much we are beholden unto the Lord, for the manifold Blessings we receive: For as Solomon saith, *The full Soul loadeth the Honey-comb, but unto the hungry Soul every bitter things is sweet,* Prov. 27. 7. So that when we shall come to a Sense of our Spiritual Poverty, it should one would think, make us highly prize it, as the only thing that can supply our Wants, and make us rich in the abundance of all good things held forth to us,

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in hearing the Word preached, and reading and digesting it to our Comforts.

Now seeing this longing after the Word that Christ hath left us, is an infallible Mark that we are of his Fold, and that he is our Shepherd, we ought therefore to enquire where Christ doth feed his Sheep, and to gain such a Mark, as may distinguish us from the Goats, who tread down the Pasture of the Sheep, Ezek. 34. 18. Who can be content as well to want the Word of God, as to have it? By which we may judge of our own Estates, whether we be the true Sheep of Christ, or the Goats of Satan, the Children of God, or Limbs of the Devil. If thou love the Word of God, and desirest to be taught, and to know where Christ doth feed his Sheep with good Pasture, and doth delight in his Word, *John* 10. 27. then thou mayst minister Comfort unto thy Soul, if thou art one of those that belong unto his Food; but if thou loath the Word of God, and never desirest to put thy Foot in God's House, but spendest the Sabbath in Gaming and Drinking, it is a Sign thou art none of Christ's Sheep, but one of the stinking Goats of Satan, and thou shalt be divided in the Last Day from the Sheep, whom he shall set on the right Hand, and the Goats on the left. Which serves to reprove three sorts of Men.

First, The Athiest, who thinks it *lost Labour* to serve the Lord, and that there is no Good got by hearing Sermons, or leading a Godly Life; but let such take Warning in time, if they expect to have any Comfort in the Hour of Death.

Secondly, The Papists, who keep poor Men in Ignorance, and all those who hinder Christ's Sheep to be taught, who otherwise would enquire, *Where Christ feedest his Sheep*. These Men are like the Scribes and Pharisees, who shut up the Kingdom of Heaven, that will not enter themselves, nor suffer those that would. Whereas the Scripture doth require of all Men, to try the Spirits, whether they be of God, 2 John 4. 1. Otherwise, if they follow their false Teachers, they are sure to perish, for if the blind lead the blind, they both fall into the Ditch; Mat, 15. 14.

Thirdly, All covetuous Persons, who enquire where they may get a good Purchase, and never enquire where Christ feeds his Sheep; who are certainly none of Christ's Sheep, for if they were, they would hear his Voice and follow him; John 10. 27. but let such be warned in time, if they expect any Comfort in Death, and at the Day of Judgment, that they now labour to be found Sheep of the Fold of Christ's, and not to follow vain Notions.

It is the Duty of the true Church of God, to acknowledge Christ Jesus alone for their Shepherd, the only Head and chief Bishop of his Church, *I am the true Shepherd, and know my Sheep, and am known of mine*; John 10. 14. which is acknowledged by Peter, in behalf of the Disciples, who saith, *Master, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the Word of Eternal Life. And Christ hath promised to be present with his Church, even to the End of the World*, Mat. 28. 20.

And the Reason why they should be thus mark'd, is, because the great Work of Salvation

tion is wholly and entirely wrought by him; as the Apostle witnesseth, *That amongst Men there is no other Name given under Heaven, in whom and by whom we can be saved, but only the Name of Jesus Christ.* And in another Place, St. Paul saith, *Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him.* Which is a plain Argument against the Church of Rome, who will not own Christ to be their great Pastor and general Shepherd, but set up the Pope as Vicar, and prefer him before the Lord that redeem'd them, and will not allow the People the Use of the Scriptures, but give them Inventions and Traditions of Men, because *They will not bear his Voice and follow him,* John 10. 27 and be content with the Food he hath prepared for them, but feed upon filthy Puddles of Men's Inventions.

By this we ought to learn to teach nothing but the Truth of God according to his reveal'd Word, not any Dreams or Imaginations of our own to please the People's Ears, but destroy their Souls. And you that are Hearers, must content your selves with the plain and pure preaching of the Word of God, and not to be carried away with vain Imaginations, that tickle the Ear, and cannot work Grace in the Heart. As the wicked Doctrines in the Church of Rome, which poyson Men's Souls, rather than edify them; which may suffice for the Church's first Request, I shall now proceed to the second.

*And where thou makest thy Flock to rest
at Noon.*

This Passage in the Text alludes to a Custom in those hot Countries, to drive their Sheep to Pastures in the Morning, and when the Sun waxeth hot, at Noon, to drive them to cool Shades for Refreshment.

So here the Church intreats him to tell her where he feeds his Sheep, that is, where his faithful People find Protection in the heat of Persecution, which is meant here by Noon day, when the Sun is most hot, as our Saviours says of evil Hearers, *And when the Sun was up, they were scorched, and for want of Root, it withered away.*

From whence we may observe First, that the Church of God sometimes is in the very Heat of Persecution, and that it is Christ's Will that his People should be tried. According to the Rule of St. Paul, *Whosoever will live Godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer Persecution.* 2 Tim. 2. 12. And David tells us, *Many are the Troubles of the Righteous, but the Lord delivers them out of all,* Psal. 55. 19.

This was the Condition of the Israe'lites in Egypt, *Exod. 1. 42.* and of the Church of the Hebrews, *They were stoned, they were hewn asunder, they were buried, they were slant with the Sword, wandering up and down in Bear-skins, and in Goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented.* And our Saviour foretels, *That they shall excommunicate you; yea, the time shall come, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God Service: And*

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he gives this Reason for it, *Because they have not known the Father nor me* : So that if we expect to live and reign with Christ in his Church Triumphant, we must patiently suffer in the Church Militant on Earth.

Secondly, That Christ never forsakes his Flock ; but in the Heat of Noon-day, even in the midst of Persecution, he gives them Comfort and Refreshment. *St. Paul* saith, *It is necessary that Afflictions should come, that the Elect may be manifested who they be.* And therefore God would have *Abraham* tempted to try his Faith, *Job* to prove his Patience, *David* his Piety, and *Paul* his Courage, who for all for a time endured the Shame and Reproach of the Cross, yet afterwards the Lord returned to them, when the time of Refreshing came. So that altho' God's Children may be under the Heat of Persecution for a time, it shall be but for a time ; he will not leave them destitute of Help for ever, but will in the End deliver them. And the Reasons are manifest.

First, If we consider God as a Father, he will take Care of us ; for what Father will not save his Child, *And if we that are evil know how to help our Children, how much more shall our heavenly Father that knoweth all things, give good things unto his Children.*

Secondly, Christ is call'd a Shepherd, and will the Shepherd see the Sheep go astray, and not bring them home, or let the Wolf devour them, and not rescue them ; and can we imagine that Christ the true Shepherd of his Church, will be more careless of his Flock,

which he purchased at so dear a Price as his own precious Blood, than a Man is of his Sheep.

Thirdly, Our Weakness is not hid from the Lord, he knoweth whereof we are made, he remembers we are but Dust; and therefore saith the Apostle, *God is faithful, that he will not suffer us to be tempted above that which we are able; but will even with the Temptation, make away to escape, that ye may be able to bear it,* 1 Cor. 10. 13. And the Reason why he suffers us to be afflicted thus, is to humble us, least by overmuch Prosperity, like *Jefferun*, we should grow fat and kick, and that being afflicted, they should lift up their Eyes to the Hills, from whence cometh their Deliverence, and not be puffed up with Pride, and rely on their own Strength, as the Papists do, which cannot avail them in time of need.

Use 1. This directs us to whom we should go in time of Trouble, for if God be our Father, he will take care of his Children; if Christ be our Shepherd, he is the Preserver of his Flock: Shall we be so foolish then as the Papists, and seek for Help from Saints and Angels; Doubtless, *Abraham is ignorant of us, and Israel knoweth us not,* Isa. 63. 16.

Use 2. Here is endless Comfort unto all the Children of God, who hath promised, and certainly will provide a Place of Comfort, a Shade at Noon-day, in the Heat of Persecution. In the midst of which, we may say with Holy David, *Why art thou cast down (O my Soul) and why art thou so disquieted within me? hope then in God,*

God, for I shall yet praise him for the Help of his Countenance.

Use 3. This shews the woful Condition of all wicked and ungodly Men, who shall hide their Heads, and find no Place of Shelter or Refuge in the time of Persecution.

The Reason the Church useth to move the Lord Jesus Christ to grant her Request, is taken from the great Danger she was likely to fall into, lest being constrained To turn aside to the Flock of thy Companions; that is, to leave the true Church and Worship of God, and joyne with the false Church, the Flock of thy Companions.

From hence we may learn, that it is impossible for Men and Women to stand the Brunt of Persecution, unless they be taught of God, and comforted by his Holy Spirit, which made David earnestly crave, That the Lord would open his Eyes, that he might see the wondrous things of God's Law, and make him to understand the way of his Precepts. And Paul pray'd for the Ephesians, That God would give them the Spirit of Wisdom, and enlighten their Minds, that they may know what is the Hope of their Calling, and what the Riches are of his glorious Inheritance.

And the Reasons are,

First, We are by Nature blind, and can see nothing, unless God direct us by his Spirit; as Solomon saith, Prov. 14, 12. The Ways that seem right unto us, the Issues thereof are the Ways of Death.

Secondly, Unless the Lord do assist us, we shall not be able to undergo the least Temptation that shall befall us.

And

And *Lastly*, The Enemies of Truth, are in their Generation wiser than the Children of Light.

Use 1. This shews that if Persecution do arise for the Truth of the Gospel, it is to be fear'd most Men would yield *to the Flock of his Companions*, either to deny God or to worship him in Idolatry, as the *Papists* do.

Use 2. This should stir us up to pray to Christ, to open our Eyes that we may see the Truth, and to live and die in it, and to try the *Spirits whether they be of God*; so that we may discern Truth from Falshood.

Use 3. This condemns all who for Fear of Persecution, turn, as doth the Wind, and joyn with *Papists, Jews, Turks*, or with the Devil himself for Advantage.

Cant. 8.

We have already heard the earnest Request of the Church, that Christ would in Mercy shew her where *he feeds his Flock*, and where he refresheth them in time of Trouble. In which we may observe three things.

First, His Love and Kindness, in that he calls her, *The fairest among Women*.

Secondly, His Reproof, *If thou know not*.

Thirdly, His Direction, *go thy way forth by the Footsteps of the Flock*; that is, by the Direction and Rule of the Word of God, which leads to all Truth, even in the Steps of the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles; and in doing of this, he adds Ornaments of Beauty to her, calling her, *the Rose of the Field, the Lilly of the Valley, the fairest amongst Women, an Orchard*

chard of Pomgranates, a Well of springing Waters, the Spouse and Sister of Christ, the Beauty of the Earth, the Glory of the World, a Lilly among Thorns, &c.

By which Expressions we see how dear and precious the Church is in the Sight of Christ her beloved Spouse, and how gracious and merciful he is to pass over her Blemishes, and call her the *fairest among Women*, tho' a little before she confesseth her self to be black and deform'd, yet now she is comely as the Lilly, or unsullied Rose.

The Use is this, Dost thou repent of thy Sins, and art trully humbled for them? Then comfort thy self, that Jesus Christ will blot them all out; so that thou shalt appear fair and beautiful in his Sight. Be not discouraged, if thou believest in Christ, and hate thy Sins, he will cover them all as he did *David's*.

Let us learn by Christ's Example, if we see any good thing in our Fellow Creature to commend it; and if any Infirmary to cover it with the Cloak of Love; and not as the Wicked do, if they spy one Blemish, to blaze it abroad, and pass by a thousand good Actions of their Lives: Which may suffice for the first Part, wherein Christ calls his Church, *the fairest among Women*.

Secondly, His gentle Reproof, *If thou know not*, I will direct and shew thee how to find it out. By which we might observe, that a true Believer may sometimes be so blind, that he doth not know where Christ doth feed his Flock; let us therefore do as the Men of *Ber-a-did*, intreat the Lord to give us the Spirit of discerning, that we may try all things, and hold the Truth.

Go thy *Way* forth by the *Footsteps* of thy *Flock*; that is, thou must walk in the *Steps* of the faithful *Servants* of the *Lord*, and embrace the true *Faith*, as *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob* did, and believe in the *Doctrine*, which the *Prophets* and *Apostles* have taught and delivered, in the *Old* and *New Testament*, and then thou shalt know where I feed my *Sheep*, that thou mayst feed with them.

If any Man desires to know where Christ feeds his *Sheep*, it is where God is truly worship'd, and we walk by *Faith* with God, as *Enoch* did, and the *Prophets* and *Apostles*, whom we may conclude to be the true *Sheep* of the *Fold*, whom Christ in this *World* doth preserve, and will preserve for ever more. For thus saith the *Lord*, *Stand in the Way*, and behold, ask for the *old Way*, which is the good *Way*, and walk therein, and you shall find *Peace* and *Rest* for your *Souls*.

Let us then stand out against the *Antichrist* of *Rome*, and as Christ saith, come out of her, joyn not with her in her false *Religion*, and idolatrous *Service* of God, lest we partake of her *Judgments*: But let us hold fast the true *Religion* of God, *Tread in the Steps* of the *Sheep*, fed by the *Tents* of the *Shepherd*. Let us live and die in the true *Church* of God, and for ever hold fast the true ancient, and holy *Religion*, which we have received from the holy *Patriarchs*, the *Prophets*, and all the holy *Apostles* of *Jesus Christ*, and then we shall be safe and sure, yea, *Blessed* and *Happy* for evermore.



A Morning Prayer for a Family.

Lord, teach us to pray, that we may call upon thy Name, prepare our Hearts to seek thee; and open thou thy Ears to hear us.

O Eternal and Everlasting Lord God, by whose gracious Providence we are preserved, for which we desire to humble both Souls and bodies before thee; Acknowledging our Unworthiness to appear before thee, who are but vile Earth and miserable Worms, the very Thoughts and Imaginations of our Hearts being evil, yet, O Lord, thou hast commanded us to call upon thee, and hast promised to grant our Requests, which are put up to thee in Faith, which gives us Confidence to call upon thee, knowing that thou wilt at all times make good thy Promise to us.

We offer unto thee, this Morning Sacrifice of Prayer and Thanksgiving, humbly confessing our manifold Sins and Transgressions against thy divine Majesty; for which we have justly deserved thy Wrath and Indignation, both in this Life and and the Life to come,

O God, we come not before thee in our own Unworthiness, but in the Worthiness of thy Son Jesus Christ, humbly beseeching thee for his sake, to forgive all our Offences, both in Thought, Word and Deed. And grant, O God, by the Assistance of thy Holy Spirit, that we may serve Thee in Righteousness and true Holiness all the Days of our Lives.

Begin now, O Lord. Repentance in us only, but of thy great Mercy perfect the same, and encrease us in the saving Knowledge of thee, and of thy Son

Son Jesus Christ, and frame our weak Hearts more and more to the Obedience to thy Will, and teach us to resign our Affections to thy Will, in time of Affliction, as in time of Prosperity.

Comfort, O Lord, our sorrowful Hearts and dejected Souls, who daily do those things which we would not, and leave undone those which thou commandest, and give us Ability to withstand the Temptations of the Devil, the World, and the sinful Lusts of the Flesh, so that we may honour thee in all our Actions, and extol thy Name while we live here, and at last behold thy Face in Glory.

And be pleas'd also to accept of our Praises and Thanksgivings, for thy many Favours which thou from time to time hast bestowed upon us, more especially for calling us by thy Word in time, and for justifying us by thy Son Christ, as well as for giving us a certain Expectation of a better Life when this is ended. Oh! it is thy great Goodness, O Lord, that thou hast not deprived us of them all, who have from time to time walked so unworthy of thy Love: But lay not to our Charge our Ingratitude, that we have not brought forth more Fruit in our Lives, but grant for the time to come, we may take more Steps to thy Kingdom.

We magnify thy Name, O Lord, for all thy temporal Blessings which thou hast in Mercy bestowed upon us, and beg of Thee, to give us a right Use of them, that we may not abuse them, unto Licentiousness. Praised be thy Holy Name, for keeping us the Night past from all Dangers both of Soul and Body, and giving us sweet and comfortable Rest; and cause that the rest of our Lives, we may be good Examples unto others, and enjoy the Peace of a good Conscience, till at last we come to reign with thee in Glory. *Our Father, &c.*

An Evening Prayer for a Family.

O Lord, prepare our Hearts for Prayer.

O Eternal God, our loving and most merciful Father, it is thy gracious Promise that were two or three are gathered together in the Name thou wilt be present among them: we thy poor and unworthy Servants, Dust and Ashes, come before thee, to offer an Evening Sacrifice of Prayer and Thanksgiving.

We confess, O Lord that we are grievous Sinners, conceived in Sin, and born in Iniquity, and have brought forth most vile Fruit in our Lives, to the great Dishonour of thy Holy Name, and the evil Example of our Brethren; for which we justly deserve thy Wrath and Indignation to be poured upon us both in this Life, and that which is to come; but we beg of thee, to be merciful unto us, and to forgive us our Sins; for against thee only have sinned and done this Evil in thy Sight.

To thee therefore do we come to crave the Pardon of our Sins, that they may not draw down upon us deserved Judgment: and to that Intent, arm and strengthen us against Sin for the time to come. Direct us aright, O Lord in the Paths of thy Commandments, and lead us by thy Holy Spirit into all Truths, so that our sinful Hearts may be brought into Subjection, and faithful Obedience unto Christ.

Guide us, O Lord that we may give our selves our Souls, and our Bodies to be lively and acceptable Sacrifices unto thee. Let thy Love constrain us to love thee, who hast made us after thine own Image, and didst preserve us in our Mothers Womb, and now daily nourishes us, and provides for us, and gives us many Blessings, which God grant we may use to thy Glory.

Forgive

Forgive us, O Lord our Unthankfulness, and let us for the time to come walk as Children of the Light, having spent the time that is past, according to the Lusts of the Flesh. Set before our Eyes the shortness of our Lives, that we may be prepared for the second Coming of our Saviour to Judgment.

O Let us be mindful of our latter End, let us number our Days aright, that we may apply our Hearts unto Wisdom and be always mindful of the Account, which we must one Day give to thee.

Accept, O merciful Lord of our Thanksgiving, to thy Majesty, for all thy Mercies and Blessing from time to time bestowed upon us, and for the Assurance that thou hast given us of a better Life when this is ended, and for thy Goodness towards us this Day, wherein thou hast freed us from many Dangers of Soul and Body and brought us with Peace and Comfort to the Beginning of this Night. In which, Lord, watch over us with thy Holy Spirit, and give us a holy and sanctified Use of our Rest and Sleep, so that we may be prepared for the Duties of the next Day; and grant us all other things which we stand in need of, thou best knowing what is most proper for us, for the sake of thy dear Son Jesus Christ our Lord: to whom with thee, O Father, together with thy Blessed Spirit, we acknowledge to be due, and desire to give all Honour, Praise, and Glory, both now and for ever, Amen. Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

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